


# PLAYSTATION PLUS

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION



## FADE TO BLACK

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH  
DELPHINE

## TEKKEN II

THE FIRST REVIEW

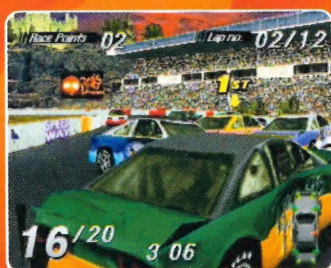
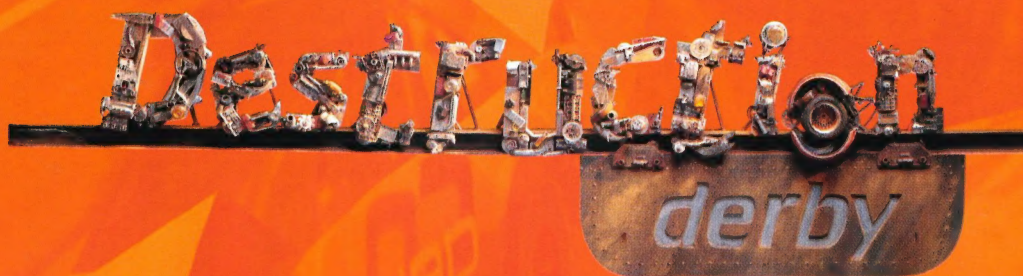




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# CONTENTS

## COVER STORY

### FADE TO BLACK: 18

Gaming giant Electronic Arts hopes to repeat the enormous success of Delphine's brilliant PC 3D blaster when *Fade to Black* is released on the PlayStation later this summer. Conrad Hart, hero of the smash-hit 16bit platformer *Flashback*, returns complete with trademark ripped jeans, scuffed trainers and dog-eared brown suede jacket, but this time he'll take your brain to another dimension as once again the alien Morphs prepare to eliminate the entire human race.

In an exclusive peek at what looks to be one of the biggest games of 1996, *PlayStation Plus* talks to the developers behind the binary masterpiece and discovers that the French aren't just famous for stripy jumpers and berets.



## REVIEWS

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Once again the players want to punch, kick, slash and disembowel their way to victory.

### DYNASTY WARS: 62

The nicer ones on horseback want to lop off the heads of the not-so-nice ones. Nice.

### RISE 2 RESURRECTION: 66

They're back, with more moves than ever before. The robots want revenge.

### WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS: 70

Remember those good old arcade days of *Defender* and *Joust*? So do we.

### NBA LIVE 96: 74

More high jumps and drops as another basketball game bounces onto the PlayStation.

### GRADIUS DELUXE: 78

Here's another of those early Eighties conversions, albeit a slightly good one.

### EXTREME PINBALL: 80

Flip! Ping! Twang! Yes, it's thwack a little silver ball around a colourful table time!

### PO'ed: 82

Armed with only a pair of slippers and a frying pan, avenge the death of your mates.

### PSYCHIC DETECTIVE: 84

Hop from mind to mind as you discover just who did in old Vlad the brain-impaler.

## TEKKEN 2

The first review of  
NAMCO's amazing  
new game.

Image © 1995/6 NAMCO





## GOING FOR GOLD



## COMPETITION

### WIN A VIDEO RECORDER: 12

GT Interactive are offering PlayStation owners a trip down memory lane, as their deal with Williams produces *Arcade Classics*, featuring the likes of *Defender*, *Robotron*, and *Joust* the game is reviewed this month on page 70. As we once again take a trip back in time to the days of four-colour sprites and single-screen escapades, GT have given us a top of the range video recorder and five copies of the game to give away as prizes.



## PREVIEWS

### FADE TO BLACK: 18

The Morphs are back, and they don't want you to stop them. Trust no one!

### BURNING ROAD: 28

Not just another car racing sim, but something with that extra *je ne sais quoi*.

### DARKSTALKERS: 32

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A mouse (who looks like a kangaroo) collecting, well, cheese really.

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Just in time for the Atlanta Games this summer comes the latest footy game.

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Bully off, it's time to clip on the protective armour and skate to victory.

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Across all terrains, regardless of the weather, the motorbikes arrive on the PlayStation.

## REGULARS

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*The X Files* comes to the PlayStation plus Ocean announce their version of Arnie's *Eraser* movie. The *PlayStation Plus* coverage begins here.

### IMPORT ROUND-UP: 88

It's a sporty old Round-Up this issue, as we look at the latest imports featuring football, rally cross, wrestling and a good old-fashioned beat 'em up.

### TIPS: 92

A glossary of PlayStation terminology plus a guide to our reviews are listed alongside this month's helpful hints. *Actua Soccer* and the final stages of *Discworld* get the full *PlayStation Plus* tips treatment this issue.

### PLUS POINTS: 112

Your views on the games, the prices and the possibility of game censorship, alongside your opinions of the latest *PlayStation Plus*.

## ONE TO ONE

### SEAN BRENNAN: 14

Virgin have recently announced they have 21 PlayStation titles in development, including games from their licencing deals with Capcom and LucasArts. They are also renowned for their 'bad lad' image with ad campaigns guaranteed to shock, as shown by sending off to the tabloids to promote *Doom II*.

The man behind Virgin and its acquisitions is Sean Brennan, and we speak to him about their future and the Sony PlayStation.



## DARKSTALKERS



## FEATURES

### GOING FOR GOLD: 42

To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Olympic Games, held in Atlanta this summer, US Gold plans launch what promises to be the most realistic sports simulation yet. But competition is extremely fierce, with both Virgin and Konami lining up on the starting blocks, looking for a taste of Olympic gold. Just who will win the desperate struggle for first place?

### PLAYSTATION TO THE POWER OF 2: 104

Just as two heads are better than one, a pair of PlayStations are more fun than a night on the tiles with a buxom floosie who doesn't mind getting the drinks in. *PlayStation Plus* presents its comprehensive guide to multi-player gaming on Sony's 32bit super console, from the serial killing of *Doom* with the cable link, to eight-way basketball using the a couple of multitaps and a sackful of joy-pads. And who said that video gaming was a sad, lonely pastime?

## RISE 2 RESURRECTION

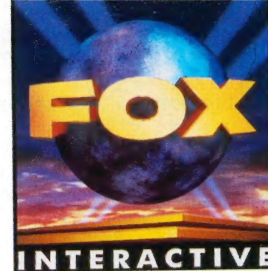






NEWS

NEWS



# EA SNAPS UP FOX INTERACTIVE

Just as the last issue of *PlayStation Plus* went to press, Electronic Arts announced that they had secured the rights to 20th Century Fox's extensive range of licenced product. After initial reports that Fox were to go it alone with their Interactive label, and that *Alien Trilogy* was to be the last release to emerge from their deal with Acclaim, it seems EA's impressive software line-up and sales throughout the last couple of 'difficult' years changed their mind. It also seems to indicate that Fox's 'difficulties' with Acclaim that plagued *Alien Trilogy's* extended development were considerably bigger than originally let on.

The first game to emerge from the deal is *Die Hard Trilogy* (previewed last issue), which is being lined up for a May release. The Probe-developed game is now 95% complete, with each of the films represented by a different game style, and linked by digitised footage lifted from the trio. However, the larger part of the deal gives Langley-based EA exclusive rights to produce games based on every existing and forthcoming Fox property – a secondary blow to Acclaim who have managed to squeeze nearly a dozen *The Simpsons* games out of their agreement with Fox. Existing Fox licences include anything to do with the *Alien* films (thus ensuring EA get to produce a game based on the fourth in the series, *Alien Resurrection*), *The Simpsons*, and the *Star Wars* trilogy. The latter is particularly

exciting as Fox will also be handling the rights to George Lucas forthcoming *Star Wars* 'prequels' – although EA are obviously remaining very tight-lipped regarding their plans for this particular trilogy.

Of the existing properties, though, a screen-saver and cartoon creator based on *The Simpsons* has been scheduled for the PC, but Fox have also confirmed that Agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully are to appear in an interactive *The X-Files* adventure for the PlayStation. With the UK gripped by *The X-Files* (*The Unopened File* video release comprising the last episode of Season 2 and the first two of Season 3 has sold in excess of 125,000 copies), as far as we can see, a game based upon *The X-Files* is a licence to print money. Full details on the game style are as yet unconfirmed, as are the team leading its development, but we'll be keeping a very close eye on this potentially brilliant title. Similarly, the forthcoming Jeff Goldblum and Will Smith-starrer *Independence Day* has also been confirmed for a PlayStation licence, although again details regarding how the movie's plot of alien flying saucers decimating Earth will convert to a game are shrouded in secrecy.

Needless to say, EA are particularly enthusiastic about their new acquisitions and have also confirmed a number of new, equally exciting, deals in the near future. As we find out, we'll let you know...



FOX'S FORTHCOMING *ALIEN RESURRECTION* (STARRING SIGOURNEY WEAVER) IS PART OF THE DEAL.

THERE ARE PLANS FOR A FOURTH *INDIANA JONES* FILM TO BE READY FOR EARLY 1998.



MAY

RELEASES

## CYBERIA

Interplay's flawed attempt at an interactive movie isn't interactive enough for sustained play. The basic idea is sound enough, but the minimalistic puzzle games and arcade sections leave a lot to be desired. Awarded 60% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 5.



## AGILE WARRIOR

After more delay, Virgin's enjoyable 3D shoot 'em up wings its way into retail. Hardly the game likely to exercise the old grey matter, but superb for moments of gratuitous violence and stunning explosions. Awarded 85% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 3.



## ALIEN TRIOLOGY

Acclaim's greatest game to date, and the best *Doom* clone the PlayStation has seen. Superb graphics, stunningly atmospheric, and the missions add a layer of depth to the basic *Id* idea. Awarded 93% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 6.



At long last, the third party titles start to filter into the shop...



## WHAT EA GET

The majority of Fox's properties have a foot in the science-fiction market, thus making them ideal video game fodder. EA's deal gives them full use of the companies back catalogue, existing and forthcoming releases, although only *The X Files* and *Independence Day* have been confirmed. These, however, are said to be undergoing consideration.

## INDIANA JONES

Apparently, a script exists for a fourth *Indiana Jones* adventure, and all parties are willing to return. However, getting Harrison Ford, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas' schedules to coincide is proving troublesome and means it may not see the light of day until sometime during 1998.

## ALIEN

*Trainspotting* director, Danny Boyle, has turned down the chance to direct the fourth *Alien* film – currently entitled *Alien Resurrection* – but Sigourney Weaver has signed on the dotted line to play Ripley again. Apparently, her return is via a DNA sample taken during her impregnation by the Alien Queen in the third film, but it will not be set on Earth as predicted.

## PREDATOR

A third film in the *Predator* series has been mooted, and bearing in mind the previous two became C64 and Amiga games respectively, a PlayStation game based on the third outing seems likely. No script details have been leaked to date, but rumours indicate a trip to the Predator homeworld.

## DOCTOR WHO

A co-production between BBC Enterprises, Universal and Fox TV, Paul McGann takes over the TARDIS as he becomes the eighth Doctor. Filmed in Vancouver, the ninety-minute story is being released on video in the UK in May, and will be shown on BBC1 a few weeks later. If successful, a series of six more stories are to be commissioned.

## THE X-FILES

The continuing adventures of Mulder and Scully have been commissioned up to a fifth series at least, plus promises of a movie. With Sky-owners currently enjoying Season 3 while BBC2 is reshowing the first, a game based upon *The X Files* is sure to capitalise on the interest the series is generating.

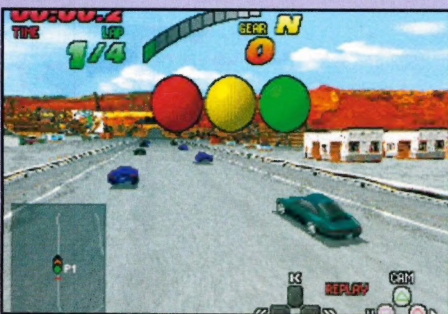


FANTASY TELEVISION'S GREATEST SUCCESS, *THE X FILES*, HAS ALREADY BEEN CONFIRMED AS A PLAYSTATION RELEASE.

PROBE'S *DIE HARD* TRILOGY IS NOW SET FOR A MAY RELEASE – WITH THE 14TH MOOTED FOR ITS RETAIL DEBUT.

## THE NEED FOR SPEED

Although it's hardly likely to win any awards as a one-player title, in link-up mode, *The Need for Speed* is a barrel of laughs. Cruise across the US in a number of vehicles, but don't expect *Ridge Racer*-style playability. Awarded 70% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 7.



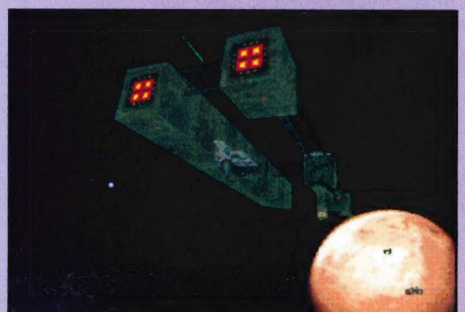
## MAGIC CARPET

Bullfrog's famed PC shoot 'em up floats on to the PlayStation in an improved conversion. Marvel as magicians float across a multi-coloured sky, gasp as huge snakes appear, and enjoy the fast (if repetitive) gameplay. Awarded 90% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 7.



## WING COMMANDER III

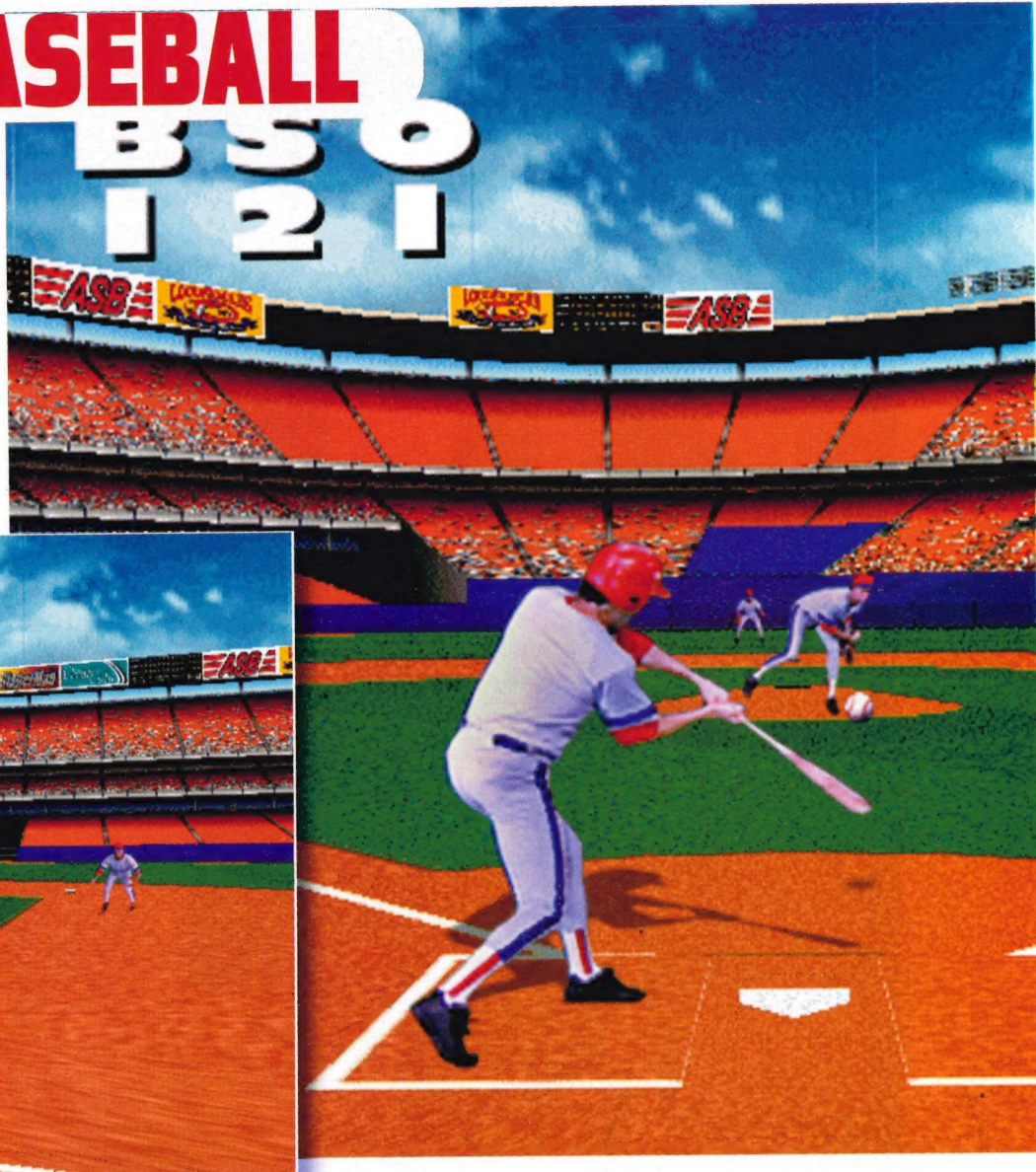
Mark Hammill's FMV debut is a huge space opera with Earth locked in a war with the feline Kilrathi. Via a series of multiple-choice options and space dogfights, a smart plot unfolds – spanning three CDs in its entirety. Awarded 80% in *PlayStation Plus* Issue 7.





# VIRGIN BASEBALL

Virgin's attempted conquest of the sportsworld continues, as they unveil an as-yet unnamed baseball game for the PlayStation. Hot on the heels of their *Powerplay Hockey* and *Decathlon* games, Virgin are currently looking into licencing their game into the World Series in some way, meaning the rendered players will share names with some of the US's biggest hitters. The game is being developed in Virgin's US offices, and the developers claim the large-scale renders shown here are true representations of the final graphics. Hmmm. As soon as a licence has been secured, a preview will follow.



## OCEAN SOCCER

Ocean's French connection continues as the Mancunian giant teams up with developers, Pan, for what they are calling 'the greatest football game ever.' According to Ocean, the game is extremely similar to Sega's *Virtua Striker* coin-op, and mixes arcade playability with realistic passing play. They are also making huge claims regarding the game's graphics, too, with talk of huge sprites that don't pixilate if they stray too close to the screen. A licence is also under negotiation — although we've been sworn to secrecy — and commentary is under discussion, with 'Big' Ron Atkinson and Alan Hanson possible targets to provide the UK samples. *PlayStation Plus* has been invited to France to see the as-yet unnamed kickaround, and will report if it lives up to Ocean's brash promises as soon as there's something to see.



## CONTRA 96

Konami have gone into PlayStation overdrive with the announcement of *Contra 96* for the Sony machine. Originally released for the Super NES as *Super Probotector*, the *Contra* series has since graced the Megadrive and Game Boy in a number of incarnations. As with previous versions, the PlayStation game will give the player control over a number of futuristic marines who are guided across a number of alien-infested locations. Using the Dpad to prompt the heroes into running and jumping, a variety of flame-throwers, rocket launchers and machine guns are available for multi-directional firing. The Super NES game was played across horizontally-scrolling views and in 3D, and it is believed that Konami are working on something even more special for the PlayStation game — with the possible move into *Doom*-style 3D. More soon.



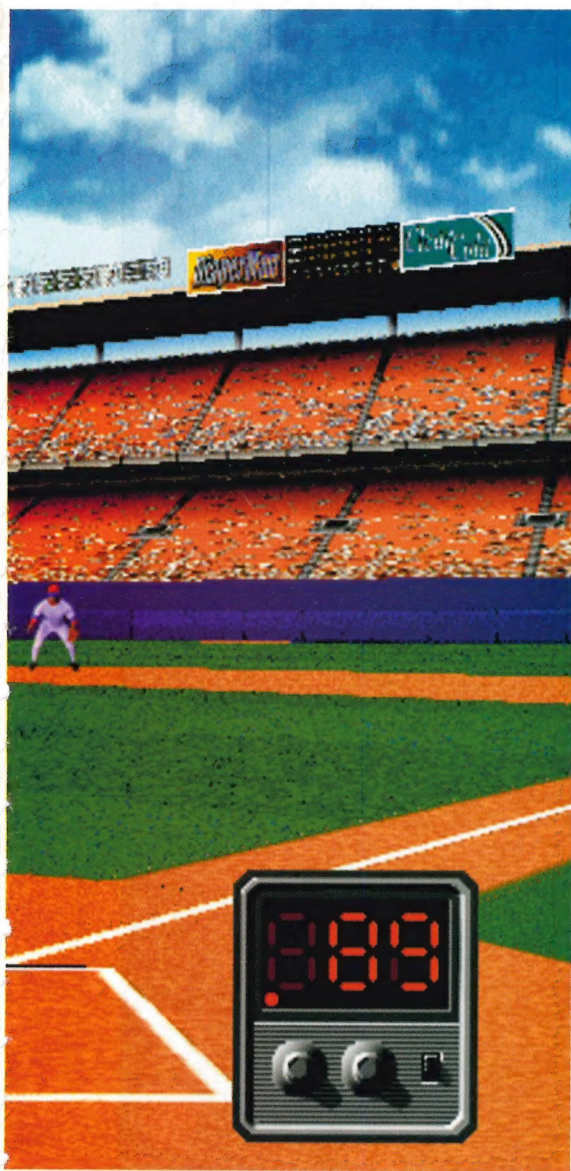
## FINAL FANTASY VII: UPDATE

Following their defection from the Nintendo 64 'Dream Team' over to the PlayStation, Square's *Final Fantasy* is emerging to be one of the greatest RPGs of all time. In their Nintendo incarnations, Square's previous *Final Fantasy* games have shifted over ten million units — but what Square are planning for the massively revamped seventh installment should take that number up even higher.

Square's reason for defecting to the Sony machine were that the PlayStation can handle the sheer volume of data needed for the series more capably than the Nintendo machine, indicating that the N64's cartridge system is proving limiting to larger specification games.

*Final Fantasy VII* is a real-time RPG, spanning a huge world inhabited by intelligent polygon-based creatures. The player has the choice of three characters — Cloud (a young lad), Aerith (the female equivalent), and Barret (who is armed with a Gattling gun) — and as the as-yet unspecified mission is revealed, the action switches between swooping, scenic camera pans and 3D battle scenes unseen in any other RPG. All the usual dragons and





## MEGAMAN X3

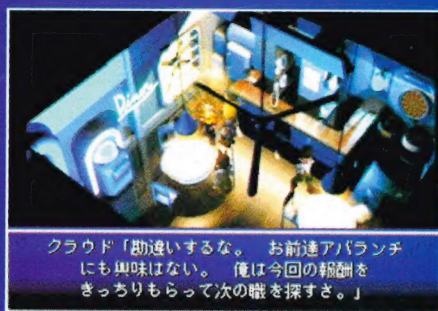
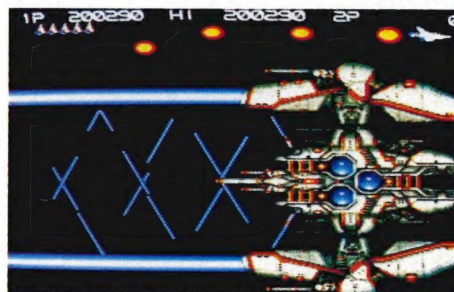
Capcom's veteran Nintendo hero, MegaMan is being lined up for a PlayStation release — subtitled X3. Having graced six Game Boy games, five NES titles, and three Super NES adventures, the Sony game is more of the same with the player guiding the blue-suited hero across a number of flick-screen, platform environments. In past games, MegaMan has been pitted against one Dr Willy and his robotic creations (all of which resemble different-coloured versions of MegaMan), and the basic plot involves collecting whatever energy has been left across the levels, offing bad guys with MegaMan's built-in lasers, and defeating the end-of-level bosses. Virgin's deal with Capcom for their forthcoming releases indicates a UK release is likely but, once again, a date has yet to be set.



## RETRO FEVER SPREADS

The recent glut of old games compiled and released on the PlayStation is set to continue as Irem, Taito, and Data East jump on the bandwagon. Although UK release dates are still to be confirmed, Irem are planning a compilation containing *R-Type* and three other unconfirmed titles, while Data East are bundling their classic, sideways-scrolling beat 'em up, *Kung-Fu Master*, on to a CD with a *Ten-Yard Fight* conversion. With Taito bundling all three *Bubble Bobble* games on one CD through Acclaim, and Williams releasing their *Arcade Classics* through GT, the compilation trend is now in full swing and most major companies are looking to past coin-op hits which would be easily converted. Similarly, Namco's plan of

releasing five *Namco Museum* compilations (with each using a letter from their name on the cover) will be continued as *Dig Dug* finds itself on a six-game CD with *Galaxians* and other blasts from the past.



クラウド「勘違いするな。お前達アバランチにも興味はない。俺は今回の報酬をきっちりもらって次の職を探す。」



allies inhabit the sprawling kingdom, and developing your chosen character is effected by general experience gained in the game, and learning new roles in the course of the game.

*Final Fantasy VII* hits the Japanese shops in December, and it looks as if Sony will snap up the UK rights for a PAL release soon after. Initial impressions, though, are very favourable indeed.

## ERASER

Returning to the licence arena, Ocean have announced they are to produce a game based on the forthcoming Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, *Eraser*. The film, which is released in the US on July 4th, stars Arnie as a member of a shady government hit squad. Liaising with the Witness Protection Scheme, Arnie fakes peoples' deaths allowing them anonymity under a new guise. In order to make the deaths look real, though, Arnie goes to great lengths via a wealth of special effect scenes — using the catchphrase 'you've been erased' as he does so. Eventually, Arnie is framed for a murder he didn't commit, and all his skills come into play to keep him one step ahead of his pursuers. The game code is being developed on the PC by Chicago-based Imagination Pilots, and while a PlayStation version has been finalised as part of the licence, a developer has yet to be found.



## DISCWORLD II

Teeney Weeny games have been commissioned to produce *Discworld II* for Psygnosis. Following the unbelievable success of Rincewind's first PC and PlayStation adventure, the motley band who live on the back of Terry Pratchett's 2D planet are regrouping. At the time of writing, it isn't known if the game is to follow the events of Pratchett's 'Light Fantastic' book, and whether Eric Idle and supporting cast return to provide the vocal duties, but the game is due for release towards the latter end of 1998, and an update will follow as soon as there's something to see.





# TESTED SPECIALISED JOYSTICK



On trial: The Asciiware Specialised Joystick with Slow, Auto, and Turbo buttons (with variable speed) @ £49.99.

## STREET FIGHTER ALPHA

As an indication of how much difference using the Specialised Joystick makes, our very own Steve Merrett (a man who, by his own admission, is crap at *Street Fighter* using a PlayStation pad) managed to complete the game with one continue on his first go using this thing. Pulling off Dragon Punches and Fireballs becomes a doddle, and all of a sudden, performing circles and multiple circles is once again a possibility. Brilliant. **5/5**

## DOOM

Hmm... *Doom*'s not a game that particularly lends itself to use with the 6-buttoned layout of this stick, but once you muck about with the configuration and got used to using flat buttons to side-step, you can have a decent game. It's not as instinctive as a hand-friendly joypad, and holding multiple buttons isn't quite so easy, but you do get used to it. The real question is 'why bother when the joypad works so well?' Not a great game to show off the joystick's strengths, methinks. **3/5**

## WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS

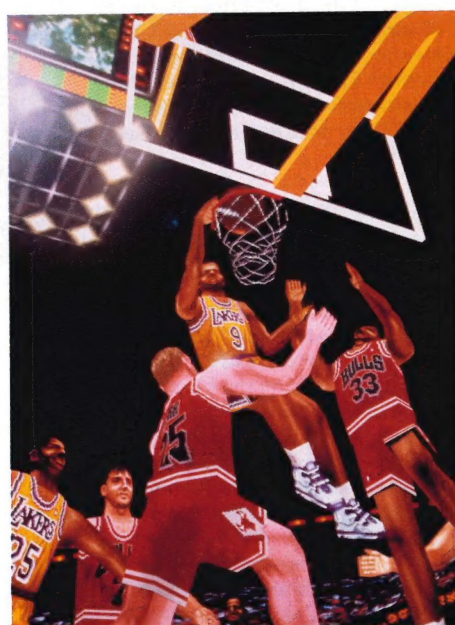
If ever there was a release made to exploit the Specialised Joystick, it's this. Considering most of these games hail from joystick-equipped arcade machines, playing with this stick just adds to the feel of yesteryear. You can alter the buttons to make *Defender* almost identical to the original cabinet configuration, while *Sinistar* and *Joust* are similarly enhanced (particularly with *Sinistar*'s frantic 360° action). It doesn't get much better than this! **5/5**

## OVERALL:

First things first — fifty quid is a huge amount of money to pay for a joystick. However, the Specialised Joystick is an extremely well made piece of hardware, with a cool design and all the features you could want from such a peripheral. Being able to alter the speed of the auto and turbo-fire is an excellent extra, and the tactile feel of the entire construction (thanks to micro-switches) is reassuringly firm. An impressive stick indeed. **5/5**

## NBA IN THE ZONE II

Following the success of *NBA In The Zone* (the game has recently become the best-selling game in the US), Konami already have a sequel in the offing. With the project at such an early stage, firm details regarding its content and appearance have yet to be confirmed, but the NBA players and teams will be updated for the new version, as will the relevant stats and details. Don't hold your breath, though, as its release is a good year away at least.



## WIN! COPIES OF ACTUA SOCCER

Gremlin are so pleased to have finally got *Actua Soccer* into the shops that they are offering five copies of the game to PlayStation Plus readers. Awarded 92%, *Actua Soccer* is a fast-paced kickaround allowing the user control over the likes of Dennis Bergkamp and Andy Cole, along with their respective international sides. A number of camera views are available, and Barry Davies rounds things off nicely with in-game commentary. To win one of the five copies, just answer the following question and send your answer to: *Actua Soccer* Competition, PlayStation Plus, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Q. Whose voice provides the commentary in *Actua Soccer*?

- A. Barry Davies
- B. Dickie Davies
- C. Brian Moore

Normal rules apply. Please make sure your entry is received by 23rd May.

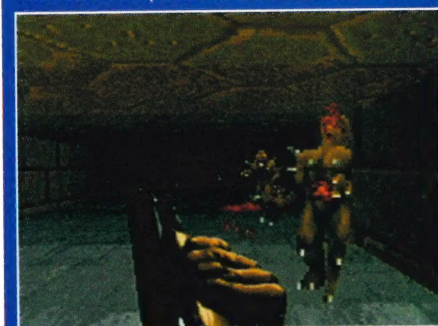


## PLAYSTATION PLUS RECOMMENDS

The best of the recent release...

## DOOM

Four months on, and Williams' stunning conversion of the Id classic is as compelling as ever. The Deathmatch mode alone makes it a worthwhile buy, and the later stages — including the infuriating Tricks and Traps make it an essential buy.



## ALIEN TRILOGY

Yes, it's a blatant *Doom* clone. However, *Alien Trilogy* is one of the most atmospheric titles we've seen, mixing gung-ho blasting action with Giger's acid-blooded menaces perfectly. Without a doubt, Acclaim's greatest game to date.



## STREET FIGHTER ALPHA

Virgin must be cock-a-hoop that they've got Capcom under their belt — especially if this arcade-perfect coin-op is anything to go by. A brilliant conversion which proves there's still some life left in the old *Street Fighter* dog yet.





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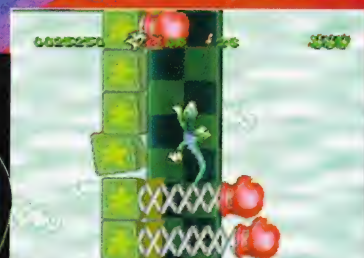
# GEX



Do not adjust your horizontal hold. 450 frames of GEX animation. CD-quality sound and hand-rendered backgrounds.



Advance thru different worlds like Indiana Jonesville and Frank N. Steintown. (Legal weasels require we be vague.)



Try jumping, tail-whipping & face-sticking to discover secret levels/bonus stages that only Irv in Engineering knows about.



Electronic Gaming Monthly "Editors' Choice Gold Award"  
Diehard Gamer "Character of the Year"

For strength, speed, and that healthy reptilian glow.

Get ready for one serious See-Food Cocktail.

It's GEX, your bug munching,

tongue-lashing alter-ego. Oh yeah, we got

Hungry-Man portions of pop-culture

cheese all right. With late night TV freaks

like Gamera and Flatulence Man.

But it's our special sauce—over 300

hilarious one-liners and sound effects

from HBO® comedian Dana Gould—that give

GEX major attitude. So forget about

good taste. And go with the skanky bug

du jour instead.



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NEW for  
Sega Saturn™  
and the  
PlayStation™  
game console.



# WIN!

## A STATE-OF-THE-ART NICAM VIDEO PLUS 5 COPIES OF WILLIAMS ARCADE CLASSICS FOR RUNNERS-UP

**T**ake a trip down memory lane with GT Interactive as they celebrate the release of *Williams Arcade Classics* by giving away a cool video cassette recorder. This top-of-the-range video is equipped with Nicam Stereo sound, long-and-short play facility, and four-head playback system for a clearer, crisper picture. Additionally GTi also has five copies of the excellent *Williams Arcade Classics* to give away as runners-up prizes, so now you'll be able to re-live the adolescent thrills of playing *Defender* in the comfort of your own home.

To win this cool prize or indeed one of the five copies of the game, take a look at the three multiple choice questions below and answer them to the best of your ability. Scribble them down on the back of a postcard or a sealed envelope, along with your name and address, and send it to: **Williams Arcade Classics Compo, PlayStation Plus, Emap Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.** As ever, usual competition rules apply (see the next month page for more details) and the Editor's decision is final.

### THE QUESTIONS

1. In what year did the *Defender* coin-op first appear?

- A. 1980
- B. 1981
- C. 1982

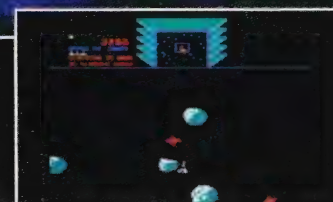
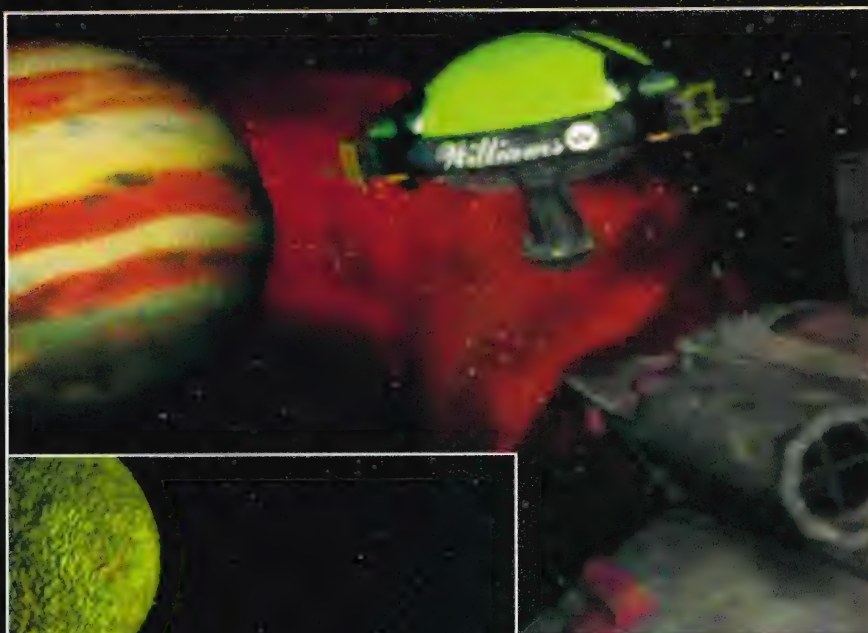
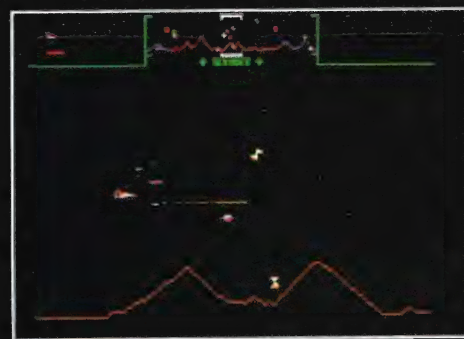
2. Which comedian pretends to ride a fake ostrich?

- A. Bernie Inn
- B. Rod Hull
- C. Bernie Clifton

3. Name the arch-enemy in the classic shoot 'em up *Sinistar*. Is it...?

- A. Sinistar
- B. Throgner
- C. Frank

Please ensure entries are received by 24th May. Multiple entries will be disqualified.





KEEP THESE.



Throw the rest away.

**DESCENT**

Your body is redundant. Descent lets you fly, twist and shoot 360°. Now on Sony Playstation. May you rest in pieces.

*Interplay*





## MAD, BAD, AND



VIRGIN HAVE BECOME NOTORIOUS FOR BEING THE BAD BOYS OF THE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY. BUT BEHIND THE BAGS OF OFFAL SENT TO *THE DAILY EXPRESS* TO PROMOTE *DOOM II* AND THE INCLUSION OF JACQUES CHIRAC IN *COMMAND AND CONQUER*'S POSTER CAMPAIGN LURKS AN EYE FOR A GOOD GAME, AND AMBITION TO BE THE VERY BEST. *PLAYSTATION PLUS* GOES HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH SEAN BRENNAN — THE STOCKY POWERHOUSE BEHIND VIRGIN'S LAUNCH INTO THE PLAYSTATION MARKET...



# DANGEROUS

## TO KNOW

**S**ean Brennan is one of the software industry's true characters. Having left university in 1983 with degrees for French and Politics ('for my sins') under his arm, Sean entered the video game industry in the sales arm of *PlayStation Plus*' sister magazine, *Computer and Video Games*. As the wheel of progress turned, Sean was there to witness the demise of the ZX81 and arrival of the Spectrum and C64, and the arrival and departure of countless one-man software houses. After eighteen months, he moved to a number of posts, before joining British Telecom's video games arm, Telecomsoft, where he worked on their Rainbird and Firebird labels. Robert Maxwell's Mirrorsoft label was his next point of call, where he entered their sales and marketing team, overseeing the release of the million-selling *Ninja Turtle* game, and the likes of *Xenon II* and *Speedball*. After three years, Maxwell went overboard, and Mirrorsoft soon went into administration. Brennan, however, moved to Virgin who, at the time were just another smallish developer. In his four years there he has overseen the inclusion of LucasArts, Westwood, Looking Glass and id to their books, while their dominance over the PC and console markets has been secured with games like *Command and Conquer* and *The Lion King*. With Brennan now entering his fourth year at Virgin, and enjoying his role as Deputy Managing Director ('I oversee everything from development to sales and marketing — I'm a jack of all trades, master of none!', he laughs, modestly) we met up with him for a chinwag and an insight of a software house always ready to try something new. Including 21 PlayStation titles...

### How has Virgin's gameplan changed since you joined the company?

**Sean Brennan:** "Quite dramatically, really. I think when I first joined the decision had pretty much been made by our President Martin Alpert in the US, to develop on PC CD ROM. We backed it to such an extent that we had a product called *Seventh Guest* in development, and, when I joined, it had already been in programming for the best part of a year. At that stage, given the budgets involved then, PC CD ROM was an out of favour format which hadn't really proved itself. The PC floppy disc market was fairly small, there was still the Amiga — along with the declining Atari ST, and, of course, consoles like the Megadrive and Nintendo 16bit. What we did, though, was to be one of the first to back PC CD ROM fervently — and that has continued to this day. PC CD ROM still remains a large part of our business, but what has really changed here is that the industry has become a lot more professional. I think the budgets have certainly come dramatically higher than they were some time ago. Is it more creative? Overall, it is more creative, I certainly think there are products that excite me more than the ones of three or four years ago. Is there a lot of repetition? I think a lot of 'me too' attitude has appeared with people copying ideas repeatedly — but that has always remained constant. As for our business plan, really it is very much the same as ever: back as many formats as we can, and to try and develop and encourage the programmers to push the limits of those hardware platforms. And when we convert from one platform to another we try and retain as many strong and original traits as we can."

### How much of the company's success do you put down to the big budgets allowed for marketing?

**SB:** "It's a bit of a misnomer to compare our marketing expenditure in percentage terms to our competitors, as it's probably three or four percentage points less. So if we allocate, say, 12.5% of our turnover to marketing,

**"...this year the PlayStation will, across Europe, be a quarter of our revenue for the year."**

then maybe a competitor may allow 15-16%. I think what we do is that firstly, we have a very strong distribution structure so we can sell a large number of units — if we sell more, we can spend more. So that's part of it, but then you have to have a success to start with, to create those budgets. So what we try, and not always successfully I hasten to add, is we try to be a little more creative — whether that's being controversial, whether that's being attention-seeking, or whatever. Or with the Disney titles we had, we were more sanitised yet still kind of hit home and were creative. If we do that, we get more for our money, and more attention. So it may seem that we spend a lot more, but in reality we haven't at all."

### What has been the single-most successful game released in your time?

**SB:** "I think probably in terms of profit, it's probably *Command and Conquer* for PC CD. We're now on 450,000 units on PC sold across Europe. And that, as it was internally developed by Westwood in Las Vegas, that is a very popular title for us. In terms of profile, a lot of the Disney titles were very successful. *The Lion King* was probably released across five versions in all, and that was a huge volume seller for us, so that's pretty important. In terms of profile generally, those two would certainly benefit us the most."

### What game do you really wish you'd published?

**SB:** "I think going back further, there's certainly a number of games that I would have wanted to be involved in. Certainly *Sim City* which, when at Mirrorsoft, we turned down. We thought it was too niche, and thought, 'how can anyone want to build a city. It's just so esoteric!' So that must prove a point that we often don't know what we're talking about! In terms of product that we actually bid for and didn't get, though, there's probably very few."

### Virgin has grown something of a 'bad lad' image. Just how carefully has this been cultivated?

**SB:** "I think there has been an element of that which is permanent at Virgin. Some may call it puerile, I don't know, but I think what we've tried to do is take the Virgin image — which is a rock'n'roll kind of image — that was back from the days of the Sex Pistols and the early days of Virgin Records. We've tried to cultivate that in such a way that is relevant





to our market place. We're also looking at who is buying our products. So you're looking at the average 14-20 year-olds who are buying our titles. I'd hope to think a lot of them would be quite into our humour and related comedy — and would prefer something a little more near the edge. Also, it does create a lot of attention, so we get more exposure and that's fine so long as it's all token. You can get a little bit repetitive though, so we may use humour and we may use violent images to generate interest, but, when all's said and done, unless the game is of high quality it doesn't really matter. What you'll probably find is some of our most controversial campaigns for AA quality products like *Screamer* and *Command and Conquer* — and which we'll follow up with *Resident Evil* — deserve the attention. I don't think we'd put out a heavy, controversial campaign for a title we'd regard as a B title, as it isn't worthwhile, because we don't want to promote it heavily if we don't think it's of high quality."



**Several of your PR stunts have gone for the shock method. Just where do you draw the line?**

**SB:** "There are obviously some things we'd never do in any way, shape or form, to promote a title. Sometimes, there have been things we have done which I've sanctioned which I haven't been too happy about. I think you have to draw a line personally, but also draw a line from a professional point of view as well. I'd never exploit anything like a natural disaster or anything like that, I don't think it's worthwhile and would be offensive to the families concerned. We just wouldn't do that. We do actually think very carefully about things, and we might say 'this could be a wacky idea, let's do it', but a number of us get involved in that, and bearing in mind censorship I think you have to be very careful, especially thinking about who we might offend. But if a game is rated an 18+, it's not so much of an issue."



**Agile Warrior is your first PlayStation release. How big is the Sony machine in your future plans?**

**SB:** "Very much so. The PlayStation will, across Europe, be a quarter of our revenue for the year. We've got about 21 titles planned for release this year, although some titles might slip out and we may ship out some titles to other publishers. We develop internally whether its in America, Japan of Europe. Secondly we have products from external developers who we effectively publish on behalf of, and, thirdly, we have distribution of titles where we do the marketing and distribution for them — such as the Capcom products where we do the distribu-

tion for them in Europe and publish the title on their behalf, as with *Resident Evil*, *Street Fighter Alpha*, etc. The majority are high level titles, and I think the volumes we achieve will be quite significant. So far, the PlayStation has proved very successful in a very short period of time. Sure, it isn't a mass-market format yet, but then again I think when the price point drops and there are a lot more titles in the market place after this Christmas, I think it will become more mass-market. I think Sony have done a great job marketing the machine initially — it's a very exciting hardware platform, a lot of the games have been very exciting and I've enjoyed them a lot, but there have also been a lot of products aren't quite as good. I think there's a great opportunity to develop some exciting, fast-paced titles — which you don't see on the PC that often!"



**The majority of your releases are through third-party affiliates. What has happened to your home-grown stuff — Spot goes to Hollywood, for example?**

**SB:** "*Spot goes to Hollywood* is very close to completion now, and we should see codes within the next four or five weeks. We revisited a lot of it because some of the early levels we created, in terms of quality of graphics, weren't necessarily high enough. The playability was excellent and was just right, and I think it's something new and refreshing for PlayStation owners. A platform game with that kind of 3D aspect hasn't really been tried before on the PlayStation, and I think that's quite exciting. So what we've done is restart the graphics and spent more time on it. We haven't gone back to the drawing board exactly, but giving them the extra four

**"...we may use humour and we may use violent images to generate interest, but, when all's said and done, unless the game is of high quality it doesn't really matter."**

or five months they needed has allowed them to create a top-notch title — and it will be something that's different. In terms of originality and playability I don't think anyone could fault it at all."



**Product slippage seems to be a common problem for you — Heart of Darkness, Cool Spot, 11th Hour, etc — how do you do about keeping titles in the public eye when they've read about them months, even years, back?**

**SB:** "It's very difficult. I feel sorry for people who read about a product, get excited about it, and want to buy it — and then there's over three or four months before it comes out. All I can say, and it's a bit of a cop-out, is from our perspective if there are slippages is it because the programmers are sitting around doing nothing? No it isn't. As with *Heart of Darkness*, the programmers are working seven days a week, but they've encountered a lot of technical problems they hadn't originally anticipated. I think as long as the end result is the best it can be, and is of high quality, it is less important. But it is really a

question of having to re-promote the product later on which costs us money and is, by then, something that you've all seen before and isn't all that exciting. Hopefully, though, when we get it into the shops and when they start playing the product itself, they'll find it's worth the wait. It is a big problem, and a perennial problem for us, and it's one we've gone to great lengths to alleviate, and we have to a large degree. Ultimately, I don't think anybody should be late at all."



**The Capcom deal was a real coup. What else can we expect from it?**

**SB:** "We're developing a close relationship with Capcom, through our Japanese office. We're showing them what we can do with the first batch of titles in terms of marketing and the sales we can achieve on them, and they're very high quality so we're keen to develop a relationship with them. From a development perspective clearly they are one of the preeminent developers in the world. I mean, *Resident Evil* is absolutely superb and we're very encouraged by the PAL version. From what I understand from our contacts out there, after the initial titles, they have a batch of very exciting titles in development and hopefully we'll be dealing with these in the future. I think *Resident Evil* will give people a taste of what Capcom are capable of, as it proves that they've broken out of that stereotypical beat 'em up genius they showed before. With *Resident Evil* they've created an arcade/adventure loaded with atmosphere, a variety of camera angles, which makes for quite a tense experience. Capcom are also very important to our portfolio as we are looking to expand into other PlayStation genres, with *Heart of Darkness*, *Command and Conquer*, products like that, as well as originally-developed products. We have a product called *Fear the Night* which is, in retrospective, an anarchic sort of platform game and arcade/adventure, but in terms of atmosphere and intensity, etc, it's more along the lines of *Resident Evil*. It's products like that which we haven't really showcased before that will be very interesting for us."



**What plans do LucasArts have for the PlayStation?**

**SB:** "LucasArts are, quite rightly, very secretive about their future plans, but they have a number of titles that will be released before the end of this year. *Ballblazer* is being developed in Germany, and *Rebel Assault II* has been confirmed as in the pipeline from Factor 5 (German development team). They also have another two titles that we know of in development, so LucasArts are also very important to us."



**Having dominated the PC market, how do you plan to do the same in the PlayStation field?**

**SB:** "I think to compete with Sony themselves is very, very difficult. If you look at the first generation of titles, pre-Christmas, most were from Sony themselves, or affiliated titles from Namco. I mean, the top title was actually *Tekken*, followed by *WipeOut* and *Destruction Derby* which was obviously Psygnosis/SIE. You have a hardware platform with a hardware manufacturer who is very active on the software side. To be in the top three or four publishers on the PlayStation is certainly our aim, but we're still very new to it. Our first title, *Agile Warrior*, was released



**EVERY CHRISTMAS  
THE ROADS ARE FULL  
OF MAD MEN.**



last week (26th March), but we were also very late into the Super NES market, and very late into the Megadrive market. I don't think we've missed out on too much so far, but, apart from the Japanese developers, if you look at the western developers we probably started at the same time. The others all did very well to start with — so congratulations to them — but it has been a very short development window. I mean, we all started at the same time, but that means, hopefully, our titles will be of better quality than what's out on the market already. The machine has to have certain types of product — racing games, beat 'em ups, sports titles, and we've got some packaged sports titles for after this year. *PowerPlay Hockey* is by Radical and is looking really good. I was in Vancouver a few weeks ago to look at a version of it, and while the gameplay still needs a slight tweaking it overall looks really, really good. We've also got a soccer game being developed which will hopefully do quite well for us towards the end of the year. So what I think we need to try and do is to be very careful, and any publisher will say this. We don't want to recycle old ideas. Basically, if a title is weak, we're going to can it. But if we put out a title and people say 'well this isn't a AA game' I think it has to get to a certain level or quality where we cut off. The worry in a sense about the PlayStation market is that there will be too many titles of mediocre quality — which is a real danger. But if we can maintain a quality threshold and exploit any relationships we have in the development community or with affiliates, then that will help us get to the top."



**There seem to be a few hitches with the Sony duplication system. Have you had any problems?**

**SB:** "We're in the fortunate position that we've only released one title, so from that perspective, no. I think the reason it'll get difficult is because of the 'closed-up' system whereby you have to go through certain channels to get something on CD production works at a particular time. Because of the one plant, there could always be delays, which is going to be a problem. From a quality point of view, then obviously Sony works with DACC to produce CDs of a very high quality. For the most part, I think they're excellent, but depending on the time of year, there will be issues along those lines. And it is frustrating, admittedly, when normally your CD is taking 48 hours maximum to turn around, but you're having to wait an extra seven to fourteen days. That said, there are benefits of being in a relationship with Sony,

in terms of quality control, in terms of marketing. Also, they created it for us — a hardware base for publishers, and they're not making a huge amount of money out of the hardware side. They also make a real effort to understand a publisher's mentality, which helped us get on board."



**How much has the industry changed since you joined?**

**SB:** "When I go to the bar or a party at a trade show I only recognise about 25% of the people there, when there was a time when I knew 75%! I think the development team perspective is the key. You're looking to develop a title for PlayStation, Saturn, and PC and a while ago there would have been two or three people handling the code and whatever. Now, in terms of teams, you're looking at ten or more people which means there'll be three or four graphic artists, programmers, some sort of manager for the whole project, and a story-boarder. That's a very positive difference, and there are a lot more parallels between making a game and making a film now. In terms of budgets and in terms of process, the competitors have got a lot more professional. Because everyone has gone through so many learning curves as an industry we repeat less mistakes now than we did back then. Recouping the extra money that now goes into games is more of an issue, too. People quite rightly bemoan the price of software — and I'm one of them, quite frankly — but if you're going to spend several million dollars on the project and yet, the market still isn't mass-market and you're not going to sell hundreds of thousands of units, you have to find a way to recoup your investment the best possible way. There have been a number of titles we've released that we've made a loss on, and the same can be said for a lot of publishers I think. It really is part of the old software industry cliché that 80% of your profit will come from 20% of your titles."



**Where exactly do you see Virgin in five years time?**

**SB:** "As we are now, I think we'll be in the top five publishers in the world across all systems. We will have, hopefully, exploited the possibility of on-line opportunities, using the PC or whatever as a medium. I hope that, in terms of development of a product, we'll be able to eliminate slippage as much as we can. If not eliminate, then reduce so its virtually unnoticeable. We also hope to be more professional than we, and a lot of people in the industry, have been until now. And, basically, to be producing quality titles that people will want to play. We want people to get pleasure from playable titles — if people in our offices are committed and enjoying what they're doing then it can only be good for the industry and buyers. I think finally, the polarisation of smaller companies into the larger ones will continue just as the smaller record companies have merged into the big labels."



**What next for Sean Brennan?**

**SB:** "To stay here and enjoy it. We're all still learning and when you stop learning and stop having fun, it's time to reconsider. Until then, I'll just keep pushing forward. That should be the same for anyone. If you enjoy what you're doing and learn from it, that's one of the most important factors of the whole thing..."

## SOUNDBITES

SEAN BRENNAN ON...

### THE STREET FIGHTER SERIES

"I think it will be modified — not just in terms of characters and special moves — but in reinventing it. The series proves that you don't need texture-mapped polygon characters to make it really exciting. I don't think it's just nostalgia, the series is about essential playability and control over its characters. It'll be refined, it'll be modified, and it will certainly carry on..."

### THE FUTURE OF THE PLAYSTATION

"I think it's going to have a very bright and rosy future. Ideally, Sony's plan is to reach a sufficient volume in the market-place, but then the price of the hardware has to come down. It'll take some time, but as soon as the price falls I think it will become more mass-market and they will be able to keep pushing new software that's original and creative. Basically, just push back the boundaries of the hardware. In a year's time, the software titles created now compared to those released now will be worlds apart. I expect it to be around for a good few years."

### SONY

"You can't knock their success — they have been very successful so far. They've made certain claims and supported those claims. They've not been brash in terms of prediction, in fact they have been realistic and hit the targets they set. I think they've learned from a lot of mistakes other manufacturers have made in the past."

### THE ATARI JAGUAR'S DEATH

"It just didn't have the letters S-O-N-Y on the casing..."

### SEGA

"The rumours of their death have been greatly exaggerated, and the Saturn is still a viable platform. In Japan it's still competing fairly closely with the PlayStation, and they do have those killer titles like *Virtua Fighter* and *Sega Rally*. They also have an arcade heritage that Sony don't. I think the Saturn price drop to £250 will help, but it will be down to the software to keep it going."

### NINTENDO

"Never doubt them. This is the only business they are in."

### THE NEXT BIG THING

"It will have to be some new on-line game. Will there be a scenario soon where you don't buy product any more? Where you'll pay to download it or per hour? I think that time is some way off, but in the next couple of years you'll see rapid growth."

### WORST GAME EVER

"Probably the Spectrum game *Don't Buy This!* which we had at Firebird. It was £2.50 and was so bad that's we just had to call it that! It was diabolical."



ONE-TO-ONE



## HART OF

## DARKNESS

Delphine enters the third dimension with the sequel to the critically-acclaimed platformer, *Flashback*. Due for release almost a year after its PC parent, has public interest in Electronic Arts' 3D epic already faded away or is Delphine responsible for creating a timeless masterpiece. *PlayStation Plus* has this exclusive report.

**D**elphine established itself as one of the world's leading software developers when it released the science fiction graphic adventure *Future Wars* in 1989. On par with the acclaimed LucasArts adventures, *Future Wars* cast the player as a humble window cleaner teleported through time and caught in the middle of a desperate battle against invading aliens. The follow-up, *Operation Stealth*, was a James Bond-ish epic in much the same vein. Delphine went 3D with *Cruise for a Corpse*, an Agatha Christie-style murder-mystery that used polygon graphics rather than pre-drawn sprites. This visual style was retained for *Another World* but the gameplay was completely overhauled, with the emphasis very much on action rather than puzzle solving.

But it wasn't until 1993 that Conrad Hart made his debut, when *Flashback* was released on the 16bit consoles. The game was substantially more sophisticated than the average platformer, boasting adventure-style problem-solving and an elaborate plot that threw

galactic agent Hart against a race of shape-changing aliens known as the Morphs.

Now he's back, and so are those blasted Morphs. But while Conrad still wears the same ripped jeans and scuffed trainers, comparing *Fade to Black* with *Flashback* is like saying *Judge Dredd: The Movie* is exactly the same as the comic books on which it was based – while the characters and plot are the same, the execution is completely different. With the introduction of another dimension, *Fade to Black* grows from a flat action adventure into an addictive cocktail of 3D platform romp and difficult puzzles, complete with cutting-edge texture-mapped graphics and meaty sound effects.

Delphine has also taken advantage of the PlayStation's cool lighting effects, and as such *Fade to Black* looks better than ever. Unfortunately the odds are still stacked against Conrad, though. With one man fighting against an entire legion of vicious morphs, the future doesn't look too bright...









## FADE TO BLACK

RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	TBA
BY	EA
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	ACTION



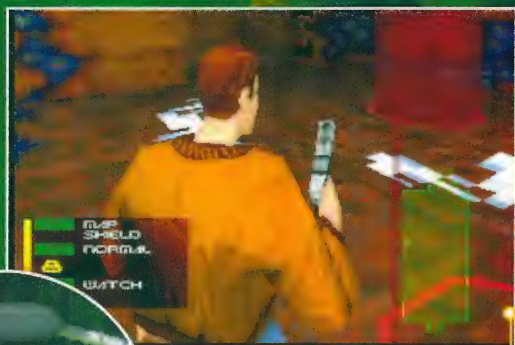
Conrad Hart isn't your average hero. He doesn't wear day-glo underpants over lycra leggings, and he certainly never wears a cape or calls himself Ginger Haired Man. He's an ordinary guy with a daunting overdraft, a Sainsbury's Saver card and small but cosy flat in the heart of Nu-London. But life isn't all that sweet. Okay, the bank manager keeps hassling Hart, but he's not the only bloke after Conrad. Those bloody Morphs are back and have once again decided to ruin Hart's chances of getting a girlfriend by following him around, pretending to be his close buddies. I mean, how on Earth can Conrad pull it off if there's a seven-foot alien standing next him, guzzling Neptunian ale and boasting how many heads he's severed in the past few days. So Conrad really has no other choice but to shoot the beer-swiggling b(e)asts with his blaster pistol. A bit harsh, admittedly, but such is Hart's level of desperation.

The Morphs aren't too happy with Hart and lock him away on a distant prison moon. Held inside a tiny steel cell in the heart of a high-security penitentiary, Hart's first objective is to escape. Thanks to human resistance fighters this is made considerably easier, at least to begin with. The forcefield door is lowered, letting Hart to leave the cell and explore. The Morphs are alerted to his presence and soon arrive in force. It's at this point that most people would choose to run away, but being a square-jawed digital dream he decides to stick around. Now if fist-fighting a carnivorous green monster doesn't impress the girls, what will?



## LOST IN SPACE

The difficulty curve in *Fade to Black* has been honed to perfection, with the initial levels being easy enough to allow gradual progression while some of the later stages should only be tackled by experienced players. As well as being challenging, the levels are also varied – from the clinical sparseness of the prison blocks to the weirder alien colonies that Hart must explore near the game's climax. With 13 huge stages to explore, *Fade to Black* is certainly not a pushover and with more platform action than *Flashback*, it really takes your brain to another dimension.

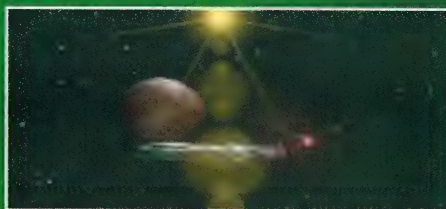


THE LEVELS GET WEIRDER AS HART EXPLORES THE PRISON.

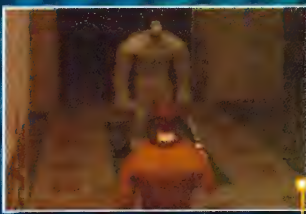


## DRIFTING THROUGH SPACE...

*Fade to Black* continues on from where *Flashback* left off, and we join Conrad Hart drifting through space encapsulated in his hypersleep capsule.







**DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT FIGHTING THIS GUY WITH YOUR PATHETIC LASER PISTOL.**

## TAKE A RUNNING JUMP

While Hart is exploring the Morph penitentiary he's free to move in any direction. He's a bit slow though, and exploring the maze of corridors takes hours unless he runs everywhere. As well as being faster, running makes dodging incoming laser

blasts considerably easier, although Hart is harder to control and must take extra care to avoid electric floor panels. These lethal slabs in the ground can be avoided by leaping across them, but one wrong move and he is fried alive.



**WALKING THROUGH THE PRISON IS SLOW AND LABORIOUS...**



**...RUNNING, HOWEVER, IS A MUCH FASTER WAY OF EXPLORING.**



**TO AVOID BEING TOASTED BY THE ELECTRIFIED FLOOR PANELS SIMPLY LEAP OVER THEM.**



**OPEN EVERY CUPBOARD AS MORE OFTEN THAN NOT THERE ARE BONUSES HIDDEN INSIDE.**

## STRAIGHT FOR THE HART

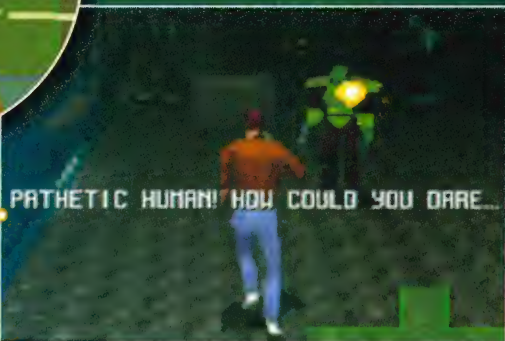
To fire his gun Hart must first crouch, which prevents him from moving other than to sidestep to avoid laser blasts. The camera then closes in to view the action from just over Hart's shoulder, his laser blaster pointing out in front. Any targets are picked out on the small scanner that automatically pops up whenever a threat approaches, while Hart's aim is indicated by targeting crosshairs that flash when he's aiming directly at any of his enemies.

Hart must fire in short controlled bursts as his pistol holds just nine shots before it must be reloaded, although an infinite supply of ammunition cartridges are available, as well as different intensity bullets such as armour-piercing, explosive and homing shots.

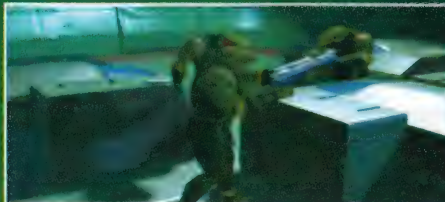
**IN A ROOM FULL OF MORPHS, CONRAD HAS NO OTHER OPTION BUT TO STAND AND FIGHT. THE TROOPS ARE EASY TARGETS, STANDING MOTIONLESS WHILE CONRAD OPENS FIRE. THE SERGEANTS ARE MORE INTELLIGENT AND CONTINUALLY DODGE, MAKING THEM DIFFICULT TO HIT.**



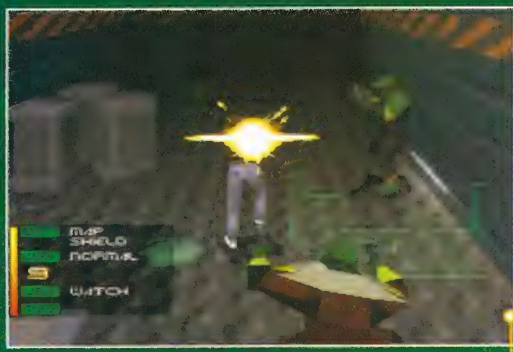
**AIMING IS MADE MUCH EASIER BY BRIGHTLY COLOURED CROSSHAIRS.**



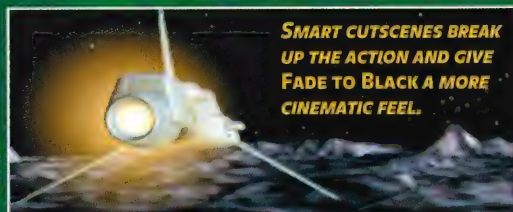
**PATHETIC HUMAN! HOW COULD YOU DARE...**







THE SHIELD CAN ONLY TAKE SO MUCH PUNISHMENT.



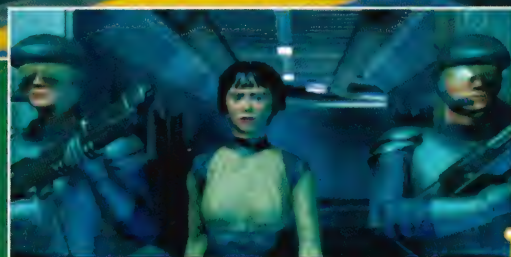
SMART CUTSCENES BREAK UP THE ACTION AND GIVE FADE TO BLACK A MORE CINEMATIC FEEL.

## CRUISING THE CORRIDORS

Halfway through the game Hart climbs inside a small Morph exploration pod and skims through the corridors of the complex. As well as piloting the ship through tight corridors and avoiding the pipes running in between walls, powerful beams of energy move slowly in the darkness, ripping through the pod if Hart flies too close. In the final version of the game Morph troops will also appear, firing at the ship from walkways that stretch across the tunnels.



A BRIEF CHANGE OF SCENERY AS CONRAD TAKES A MORPH POD FOR A SPIN.



THROUGHOUT THE GAME CONRAD IS AIDED BY A SMALL GROUP OF HUMAN RESISTANCE FIGHTERS.



THE MORPHS CONTINUE TO PATROL, BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF THE MONSTIE BEHIND THEM.

## ALAS POOR CONRAD

Conrad Hart is extremely good at dying. Throughout the game our hero is melted, hacked, shot, fried, sliced in half... imagine the most horrible way to die and, chances are, the same will happen to Hart over the course of time. No wonder the poor bloke's trainers are ruined and his jeans are ripped.



CONRAD DIES AT THE CLAWS OF A SPIDER DROID...



...AND IS THEN FRIED ON THE ELECTRIC FLOOR PANELS...



...BEFORE BEING SLICED IN TWO BY A MASSIVE CLAW...



...AND THEN PUMMELED BY A STONE GOLEM...



## MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER DANGERS

The New Alcatraz penitentiary is a dangerous place for an escape convict. Around every corner waits an enemy, from morph soldiers to patrolling sentry droids. Even though Hart is equipped with a laser pistol and a load of different bullets including explosive and armour-piercing round, the chances of him dying at the hands of any of these beasts are frighteningly high unless he's quick on the draw.

**Bull Morph**

This hulk of a beast charges in and hacks away at Hart with huge claws. Shoot the git before he gets too close.

**Walker Robots**

Thick armour makes the walker droid impervious to attack from Hart's normal laser so either use armour-piercing rounds or run away!

**Morph Trooper**

The commonest enemy in the game, the Morphs attack with laser rifles and can also swallow Hart whole when in 'blob' form.

**Sentry Droid**

Floating slowly down the corridors, the Sentry droid is equipped with a heavy chain gun that can rip through Hart's forcefield.



UNFORTUNATELY THESE GUYS  
AREN'T ALL THEY SEEM.

**Morph Sergeant**

Carrying a laser pistol rather than a rifle, the sergeant is faster on his feet and can therefore dodge your shots more easily.

**Patrol Robot**

A smaller cousin of the Sentry droid, the Patrol robot is faster but is only equipped with a pathetic laser.

**Spider Droid**

One of the first enemies Conrad encounters in the game, the spider droid is tough and can sustain two clips of ammo before dying.

**Purple People Eater**

This git is tough and extremely fast. Use explosive or armour-piercing rounds if you've got them, otherwise fire and reload very quickly!



...AND FINALLY MELTED ALIVE. YUM.



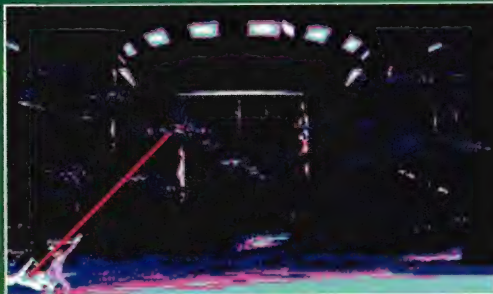
ANOTHER GRATUITOUS EXAMPLE OF FADE TO BLACK'S EXTREMELY NIFTY CUTSCENES.

## DELPHINE DEEPER

French developer Delphine has established itself as one of the leading coding teams across the globe after less than a decade programming games. It hasn't all been a bed of roses though, and here are just some of the high (and low) lights of its near-perfect career.

### FUTURE WARS

Delphine's first game was an absorbing adventure that, although impressive for its time, wasn't without its faults. Visually superior to its rivals (especially the *Space Quest* games from Sierra), *Future Wars* was dogged by a rather fiddly game interface.



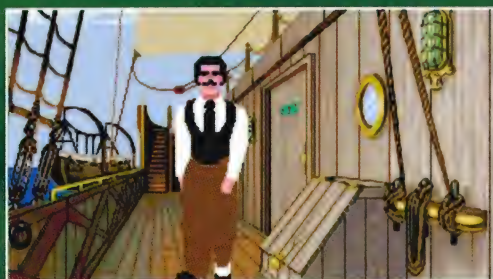
### OPERATION STEALTH

As secret agent John Glames, the objective of Delphine's second adventure was to infiltrate the secret headquarters of the arch-villain and recover a stolen Stealth Bomber. More polished than its predecessor, *Operation Stealth* boasted arcade sections to break up the puzzles.



### CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

The release of *Cruise for a Corpse* marked a new era for Delphine. Dispensing with the small, sprite-based graphics of old the French coders switched to polygon-based graphics, which allowed greater fluidity of movement and slick 3D scaling.



### ANOTHER WORLD

Just as *Cruise for a Corpse* changed the style in which Delphine's games were presented, *Another World* marked a change in direction in terms of gameplay. Putting the graphic adventure on a back-burner, Delphine created one of the best 16bit platformers ever.



### FLASHBACK

Flashback was the follow-up to *Another World* and was the title which introduced Conrad B Hart to the gaming public. Boasting colourful graphics and some of the most realistic animation to date (thanks to some very advanced rotoscoping techniques), *Flashback* still ranks highly up in platform heaven.



### SHAQ-FU

You can't be perfect all the time and *Shaq-Fu* is the one aberration in Delphine's otherwise untarnished track record. A fighting game based on the towering basketball star Shaquille O'Neal, it was a commercial failure that was overshadowed by the infinitely better *Street Fighter* games.



# ANSWERS PLEASE...

Having headed the team behind *Fade to Black* on the PlayStation, Delphine's Paul Cuisset speaks out about his latest project.

**PSP:** Did the arduous task of converting *Fade to Black* to the PlayStation start as soon as the PC original was finished?

**PC:** Yes, we've been working on the PlayStation version of *Fade to Black* for around eight months, originally starting off with a team of three which eventually expanded to six.

**PSP:** How difficult was it to convert *Fade to Black* to the PlayStation?

**PC:** It was a nightmare. The PC version used a lot of data, and we had to squeeze 8Mb down to 2Mb for the PlayStation. We also wanted it to be better than the PC version, so we had to re-draw all the textures to include the different lighting, making the most of the PlayStation. Ultimately it was really quite hard because we had two challenges: one to fit the game onto the PlayStation and the other to make it better.

**PSP:** How did you come up with the concept of *Fade to Black*?

**PC:** It's quite a long story. It was originally going to be a 2D game, for which we already had a storyline. Then we switched to 3D, which gave us a lot of new possibilities. From that we added a lot of things and a lot of new ideas.

**PSP:** Was it always meant to be a sequel to *Flashback*, and are there any plans to resurrect Conrad Hart in the future?

**PC:** Yes, it was always meant to be a sequel, but there are no plans to bring Conrad back just yet. With *Fade to Black* we had a completely new story which was worth using Conrad for – the goal was to take Conrad from *Flashback* and not just do a plain sequel, but to try something completely original.

**PSP:** Was it difficult creating what is essentially *Flashback* in 3D?

**PC:** It was quite hard because of the added dimension. It's quite tricky from a technical point of view and the gameplay had to be adapted to fit the different perspective. When you play *Flashback* in 2D you have a complete view of the game, so you immediately see enemies and traps. In 3D you can only see where Conrad is facing, so you're quite limited as to what you can do. It was quite difficult to make it challenging but still easy to play.

**PSP:** In terms of game mechanics is the PlayStation version of *Fade to Black* exactly the same one as the PC original?

**PC:** Mainly, yes. We adjusted the controls slightly, after listening to criticisms aimed at the PC game. It's much simpler to play than the PC game.

**PSP:** Are there any plans to follow up *Fade to Black* with a sequel?

**PC:** Not immediately. We are working on another game, but it's a bit too soon to start talking about it. However, it is in 3D and I promise it will be completely different to *Fade to Black*.









COMPANY	FUNSOFT
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	RACING



French developer Toka has got balls. Take a look at the pictures on this page and see if there's anything vaguely familiar. A similarity to *Sega Rally*? Yes. Practically identical to *Daytona USA*? Definitely! *Burning Road* pays homage to these classic arcade racers, not by drawing inspiration from the original and incorporating them in a slightly different way but by nabbing all the best bits of the game and unashamedly copying them.

And why not? After all, *Daytona USA* was, and still is for that matter, a brilliant game even though it's two years old. Secondly, why should the Saturn have all the fun, boasting smart conversions of *Daytona USA* and more recently *Sega Rally*? Now it's the turn of the Sony PlayStation, and boy does it look like we're in for a treat.

Currently six months away from completion, *Burning Road* is the working title for Toka's super-fast arcade racer. So far just one of the three courses has been properly completed, although this single circuit gives more than a good impression of what the final game will be like. Faster, harder and more exciting than even *Ridge Racer Revolution*, *Burning Road* has all the qualities of a classic in the making. With cool graphics, a stomping soundtrack, perfectly balanced gameplay and, most important of all, a two-player link-up option, now all Toka must do is settle on a name. What about *Scorchio Freeway*? Hmm, maybe not.

## TRUCKERS

So you reckon you're a bit good? Check out this challenging advanced course then.

# Burning Road



## CAMERA TRICKERY

What good is a racing game with more views than a picturesque holiday resort. Thankfully *Burning Road* has got 'em by the boot-full, from the incredibly fast bonnet-mounted camera angle the seemingly slower and therefore more controllable chase cameras. There's also an in-cockpit view complete with a light-sourced pendant which swings as the car is thrown around the dirt track.





## TRACK RECORD

Like *Sega Rally*, *Burning Road* will feature three tracks of varying difficulty. The beginners course is fairly easy, with long straights and shallow bends. Watch out for the jumps though, as approaching them from the wrong angle could leave you crash landing into the tyre wall. The advanced circuit is slightly harder, with obstacles such as oil drums and cones scattered in the road. There's also the difficult snow section, the car sliding across the icy track surface and generally making it very difficult to drive. As for the expert course, as yet Toka finished designing it so the end result will remain a surprise. One other thing worth mentioning is that Funsoft, *Burning Road*'s publisher, reckon they'll be a hidden circuit in the game, bringing the total up to four. More than *Ridge Racer* then.

**ALTHOUGH BURNING ROAD FEATURES JUST THREE COURSES, THEY ARE ALL EXTREMELY VARIED.**

## SELECT YOUR RACE



## INSTANT REPLAY

After each race you're treated to a complete action replay, highlighting the best (and worst) bits of your last performance. Camera angles automatically switch to give the replay television quality, which is further enhanced by tremendous attention to detail. Each of the cars is plastered with logos, the wheels begin to buckle after too many crashes and even the suspension blocks behind the monster truck's oversized tyres are visible. Toka is still refining the game's presentation too, and in the final game the cars will smoother and more defined.

## EXTRA VEHICULAR ACTIVITIES

There's a choice of four cars in which to race, each with its unique handling and performance statistics. The huge black monster truck has massive wheels, and is pretty slow but proves excellent for ramming the other drivers off the course. The two speedy saloon car racers are fast but suffer more damage as a result of a crash. The remaining vehicle, a weird custom-built mini-van nicknamed Nitro, is a balanced mix of speed and durability.

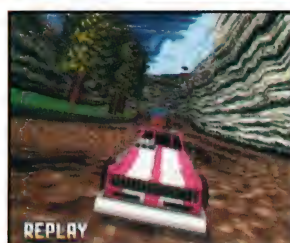
**NITRO IS PROBABLY THE BEST ALL-ROUND CAR BUT THE MONSTER TRUCK LOOKS MOST IMPRESSIVE.**







**BUILD UP ENOUGH SPEED AND EVEN CHUNKY THE MONSTER TRUCK CAN FLY THROUGH THE AIR WITH THE GREATEST OF EASE. WELL, ALMOST.**



## ROAD BLOCK

Each circuit is littered with obstacles that make winning the race much harder. Speeding through the muddy pools splashes water onto the windscreen, making it more difficult to see. Ramming oil drums, road signs and traffic cones temporarily slows the car down, as does colliding with another car, while the icy-covered bend on the advanced course is practically impossible to corner without sliding out into the rocky wall. Jumps also feature heavily in *Burning Road*, and look smart in the action replays.



## FASTEST LAP



The beginner's circuit is a fast track to race on, with long straights and easy bends. Speeds exceeding 200kmh can be achieved along the back straight, although you'll have to slam on the brakes for the winding corner at the top. Otherwise, keep the accelerator pedal firmly pressed to the floor and burn some road!



**THE LIGHTS FLICKER FROM RED TO GREEN AND THE PACK LURCHES OFF THE STARTING LINE.**



**THE BEGINNER'S CIRCUIT STARTS WITH A LONG STRAIGHT, WITH WINDMILLS LINING THE ROAD.**



**SPEEDING OUT OF THE TUNNEL, THE ROAD SURFACE CHANGES FROM TARMAC TO SLIPPERY MUD.**



**WITH JUST A FEW SECONDS LEFT ON THE TIMER, A CHECKPOINT APPEARS IN THE DISTANCE. PHEW!**



**AFTER SLIDING AROUND A LEFT-HAND CORNER, THE TRACK DUCKS UNDERNEATH A ROCKY OVERHANG.**



## KERRARUNCH

With each course plagued by muddy hairpin bends and icy corners it's inevitable that you'll crash at some point during a race, but why worry when the crashes look so cool! Skidding off the circuit and ploughing head-first into a brick wall, the bonnet is crumpled with a hefty crunch and the car flips into the air. The wreck then falls back to the ground and rolls back onto its wheels, allowing you to continue the race.



THE CRASHES IN BURNING ROAD ARE DEAD GOOD, WITH THE CAR SPINNING UNCONTROLLABLY THROUGH THE AIR BEFORE RESTING BACK ON ITS WHEELS.



ANY ONE WHO HAS PLAYED DAYTONA USA WILL INSTANTLY RECOGNISE THE OVER-TAKING MONITOR ON THE RIGHT OF THE SCREEN.



THE TRACK THEN LEANS INTO A FAST RIGHT-HAND BEND WHICH CAN BE TAKEN AT FULL SPEED.



AS THE BEND DRAWS TO A CLOSE, A TUNNEL CUT INTO A HUGE MOUNTAIN LOOMS AHEAD.



THE RACE CONTINUES INSIDE THE TUNNEL, WITH EVEN THE HELICOPTER CONTINUING THE CHASE.



OFF THE MUD AND BACK ON THE ROAD, A SHARP RIGHT TURN IS JUST VISIBLE IN THE DISTANCE.



THE CORNER IS TIGHT, BUT IF YOU EASE OFF THE GAS IT SHOULD CAUSE NO PROBLEMS.



BACK ONTO THE HOME STRETCH, THE NEXT LAP BEGINS HAVING PASSED THE CHECKPOINT.



# PREVIEW



# Darkstalkers

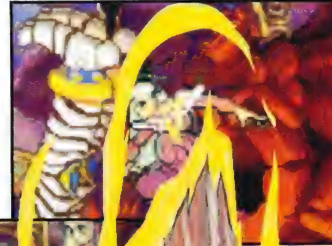
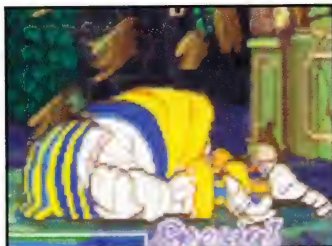


he games industry has enjoyed a fair old number of beat 'em ups over the years, and even the relatively young

PlayStation has seen a good few, but never before have such a strange group of individuals been brought together in one game as those in *Darkstalkers*. Though we've previously seen ninjas fighting ninjas, robots fighting robots, and even such beat 'em up legends as Ryu, Ken, Chun-Li and Co on the PlayStation, it is, however, fair to say that we've never seen a mummified giant fighting a werewolf, or a Frankenstein monster battling a samurai (although I'm sure that if I looked hard enough there'd be some crap Hammer Horror movie somewhere that has!)

Anyway, here we are with Virgin's *Darkstalkers*, and though there is an elaborate plot, it really isn't necessary. All you need to know is that there are tons of characters to choose from, each armed with a selection of special moves and super powers, and each with a very distinctive style and look.

As with all of Capcom's beat 'em ups, it's not just a simple slug-fest, but more a case of studying each fighter's attributes until you know the best tactics for each bout. Good use of multiple-hitting combinations, effective blocking and the ability to pull off the moves you want when you want are all essential elements to be practised and mastered. Other than that, it's business as usual...



COMPANY	VIRGIN
RELEASE	APRIL
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	2
GENRE	BEAT 'EM UP

## ANAKARIS

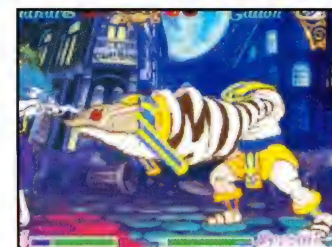
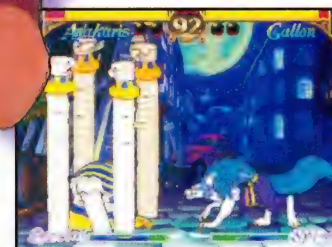


Mummy

Although Anakaris appears to be a slower, more cumbersome version of the famous *Street Fighter*-ing Dhalsim, his large repertoire of moves, coupled with his ability to effectively split his body in two — allowing him to attack from distance — make him a worthy combatant. As well as being able to make limbs appear from various positions on-screen, Anakaris has some weird attacks, including being able to call down a massive sarcophagus to crush those below, and even morphing his arms into a giant serpent.

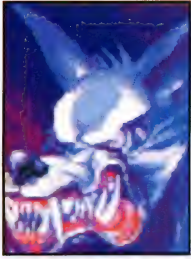


IF THINGS GET TOO NASTY, JUST USE YOUR ANCIENT POWERS TO SUMMON A HUGE CRUSHING CASKET.





## GALLON



Werewolf

In his quest for permanent humanity, Gallon ploughs his way through the *Darkstalkers* game preferring a more direct style than many of the other contestants. He makes use of his speed and agility, conjuring up Guile-esque flash kicks and multi-hitting combinations throughout. His claws can be used to hack and slash his way through opponents' defences, and he can even turn himself into a flaming projectile that flies across the screen at top speed. Just like in this picture...



**FLAMING NORA! IF THERE'S ONE WAY TO AVOID GETTING CORNERED, IT'S TO BECOME A FIREY TORPEDO. OUCH!**

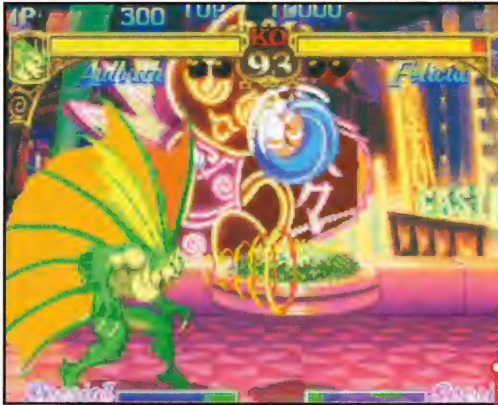


## AULBATH

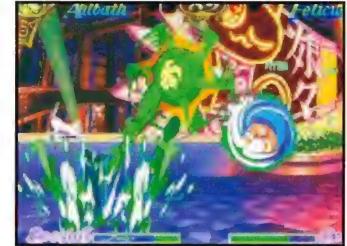


Merman

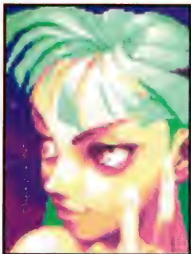
You really have to wonder if there's some software company in-joke going on here (I mean, a merman with the word 'bath' in his name!) Aulbath is bright green and fights to protect his home from pollution, employing strange hypnotic rays to augment his close-combat style. He is able to use his body for both defence and offence, inflating his chest and projecting spikes for all and sundry to land on. He also has a spinning aerial attack which is excellent for taking down flying characters.



**AS WELL AS IMPRESSING GIRLS WITH HIS HUGE FINS, THIS MOVE ALSO SENDS OUT A SONIC SHRIEK.**



## MORRIGAN

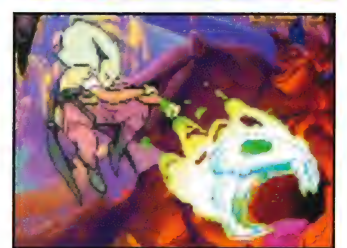


Succubus

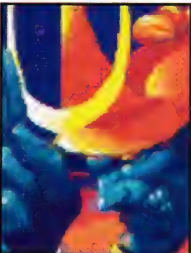
Call me sad, call me lonely, but I've always wanted a succubus of my own. However, I don't want one like this! Morrigan is a very *Street Fighter*-esque combatant, utilising dragon punches and various mystical projectiles to complement her generally straight forward fighting style. She also has a nasty pointed tail which can be used to overwhelm opponents should they get too close for comfort. A good all-round fighter to play with and one for the beginners to play with.



**IF YOU PREFER A MORE DIRECT APPROACH, GET IN CLOSE AND SET THOSE TAILS A 'WHIPPIN'.**



## BISHAMAN



Samurai

Now our Samurai Bishaman is an interesting little addition to the *Darkstalkers* roster, making use of some very interesting moves and truly devastating combinations. He loves nothing more than to sod about with his rather sharp sword, and the programmers were kind enough to supply the vicious buggar with his own fatality (a la *Mortal Kombat*). This move involves slicing his opponent clean in half (which was nice). Needless to say, when fighting Bishaman you want to keep your distance.



**THE ONLY FIGHTER WITH A 'FATALITY' IS BISHAMAN. UNSHEATH THY SWORD AND SLICE AWAY!**





## SASQUATCH

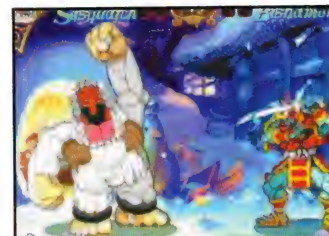


Big Foot

Though fat and cumbersome-looking, Sasquatch is actually one of the most powerful characters to be found in *Darkstalkers*. He has some excellent close-range attacks, and though at a general disadvantage when fighting opponents with powerful projectile moves, he can actually travel across the screen at a surprisingly good pace. Despite being armed with some weird special moves, Sasquatch is actually at his best when just getting stuck in a close-quarters. He also likes to roar. A lot.



WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT ONE OF A BIG FOOT'S MOVES WOULD INVOLVE A 'BIG FOOT'? WEIRD EH?



## VICTOR

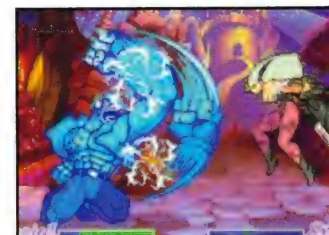


Frankenstein

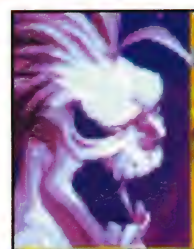
As you'd probably expect from looking at the shots, Victor is the bruiser of the bunch. Relying more on size and pure strength in combat than clever tricks, our lad isn't too well provided for in the cerebral department, so don't expect much more than a straight forward brawl when fighting. He is, however, endowed with enormous limbs and some mega-powerful special attacks, so if you know what's good for you you'll stay at a fair distance. It's also a good idea not to spill his pint.



NOTHING TOO CLEVER FOR OUR VICTOR - A CHARACTER THAT DEFINITELY LIKES TO JUST GET STUCK IN.



## ZABEL

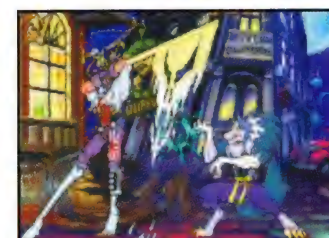


Zombie

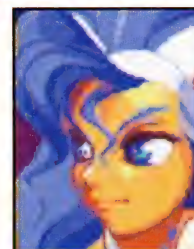
Being a known member of the undead, Zabel has access to some of the strangest moves seen in the game. He's able (no, he's Zabel. Aha-ha. Now *that's* comedy) er... yes, anyway he's able to warp his body around the place, taking on all sorts of interesting shapes in his quest to beat the living crap out of you. Buzzsaws and swords are there to be utilised, along with an already impressive selection of 'standard' moves. A fun fighter to play with.



CRAZY LEGS AHOY! ZABEL REALLY IS A STRANGE CHAP, AND DEFIES THE LAWS OF PHYSICS ON A REGULAR BASIS.



## FELICIA

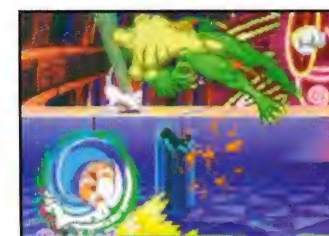


Catwoman

As well as being a bit of a semi-naked babe, Felicia the catwoman is an excellent all-round fighter, employing some very *Street Fighter*-esque moves as she works through her opponents. Rolling dragon punches and Chun-Li-styled wall-bouncing activities all add-up to fast-paced combat, and she can also execute massive multiple-hitting combinations. As if that weren't enough, she can even use her tail against you. Did I mention that she's semi-naked? I did? Oh, sorry.



SHE'S A GAL! OH YES, DON'T BE SURPRISED TO FIND FELICIA ATTACKING YOU FROM ANY ANGLE. HMMM.



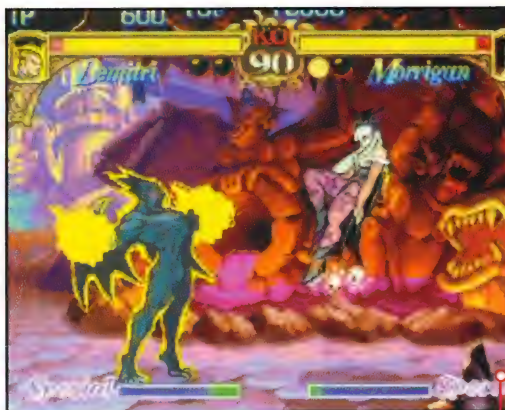


## DEMITRI

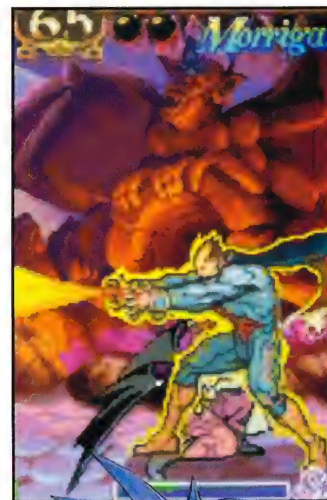


Vampire

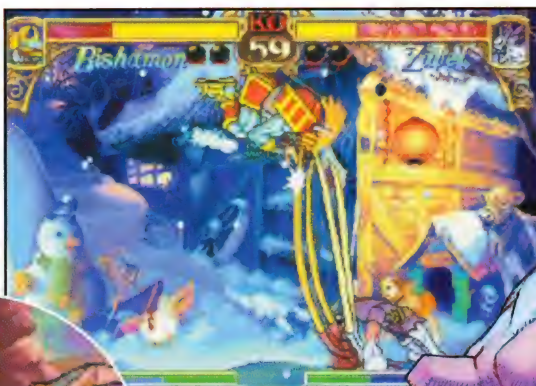
Demitri is probably the most 'standard' of all the fighters, with a combination of close-combat moves and projectiles. The vampire's moves are more *Street Fighter*-based than the other characters (with dragon punch, fireball and hurricane kick moves) and is therefore the best option for beginners. Like many other beat 'em ups, *Darkstalkers* features interactive backgrounds, so throw someone in the right direction and stand back as the demolition begins.



BREASTS A FLAME, OUR DEMITRI PREPARES TO FIRE OFF A SIZZLING FIREBALL. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT FIRE DOES.



FELICIA BACKS OFF AS AULBATH SNAPS HIS MASSIVE PINCERS!



## SPECIAL SELECTION

What beat 'em up preview would be complete without a nice picture of all the gang together? Enjoy...





RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	TBA
BY	OCEAN
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	PLATFORM



### Cheesy the Mouse.

Hmmm, bad name. It's a bit like calling a rabbit Big Ears, or having a parrot named Squawk, it's all a bit too obvious. Dirty Rat would have been better, or maybe Plague – something that sparks a little excitement or intrigue. But *Cheesy the Mouse*? Sounds more like one of those naff Saturday morning cartoon.

Thankfully the game promises to be considerably more exhilarating than its title. Okay, it's a platform romp, but one with a difference. Where as *Rayman* and *Johnny Bazoorkatone* were both terribly simple run-from-left-to-right ledge leapers with very little innovation, *Cheesy the Mouse's* third dimension gives the game much needed variety and indeed originality. Cheesy's quest to stuff his cheeks with as much Gruyere as possible is set in a (comparatively) massive house, its many rooms providing an enemy-infested background for each level. Some are straightforward platform stages, others see Cheesy riding a mine cart along a rickety track riddled with obstacles. All have been beautifully created though, the elaborate 3D backgrounds and polygon characters giving the game a sense of depth not found in other platformers.

As for Cheesy himself, Ocean hopes he's going to be a digital hero much like Sonic the Hedgehog. He may not have the speed or attitude of Sega's spiky icon but he's cute, he's cuddly and he carries a gun. Cool. Cheesy does have one minor drawback, though. With big ears, a long snout and huge feet, Cheesy looks more like a kangaroo than a mouse, but then have you ever seen a blue hedgehog?



# Cheesy the Mouse

**IT'S CHEESY, CHEESY THE MOUSE. EVERYONE KNOWS HIS NAME. HERE THE CUTE KANGAROO-LIKE MOUSE EXPLORES A TABLE-TOP CLUTTERED WITH ALL SORTS OF WEIRD SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT. WATCH OUT FOR BUNSEN BURNERS AND SPILT ACID.**



## CHEESY FEATS

Little Cheesy is in deep trouble. He's trapped inside a huge castle belonging to a powerful wizard who's going to use the ill-fated rodent in his magical experiments. Cheesy must therefore escape, by exploring each of the rooms dotted around the tower. Each level is accessed from the central chamber, a large room with various exits leading off to different bits of the castle. Climb up chimney and Cheesy will eventually reach the roof, while dropping into the drain takes the heroic mouse down into the piranha-infested sewers.



**THE ARROWS LEAD TO DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF THE CASTLE.**



**WOAH! CHEESY COMES A CROPPER ON THE DISUSED MINE CART TRACK, FALLING TO HIS DEATH.**



**CHEESY IS CONSTRUCTED FROM GOURAUD-SHADED POLYGONS AND LOOKS QUITE CUTE, REALLY.**



## BRIE-CA-BRAC

Collectibles. They're great, aren't they? Well yes, especially if you're a little mouse who can only sustain a couple of hits before popping his clogs. Health top-ups are among the most useful bonuses Cheesy can pick up and surprisingly are fairly abundant, while extra lives are a lot more scarce. Unsurprisingly it's slices of cheese our buck-toothed hero likes the best, which are scattered throughout every level of the game. Yum.



**CHEESY BY NAME, CHEESY BY NATURE.** THE RIOTOUS RODENT GRABS A LITTLE OF HIS NAMESAKE.



**CHEESY CAN TAKE UP TO FIVE HITS BEFORE DYING, BUT GRABBING A HEART WILL RESTORE SOME ENERGY.**

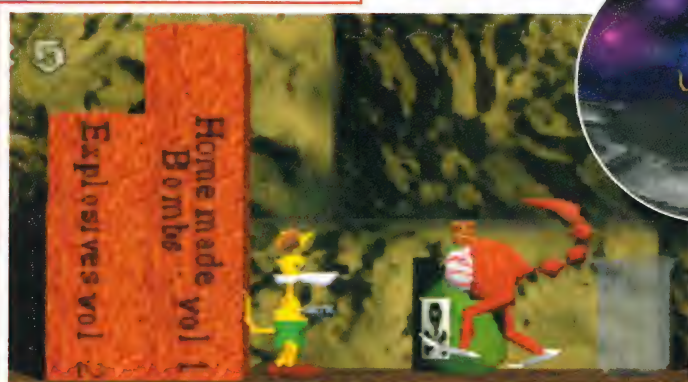


**EXTRA LIVES ARE SCARCE BUT EXTREMELY HANDY.**

## ARE YOU A MAN OR A MOUSE?



Mice are tiny fragile creatures, and Cheesy is no match for the many obstacles he encounters on his quest for cheddar. Danger lurks around every corner, from the weird acid monsters that spit globs of poisonous green goo to magic mushrooms which bounce around unpredictably. More dangerous are the dragons and UFOs that fly through the midnight sky, and also the huge spider that dangles in the darkest depths of the wizard's castle.



## TAKE YOUR BRAIN TO ANOTHER DIMENSION



*Cheesy the Mouse* is no ordinary platform game with flat, 2D levels. Instead each stage enters the third dimension, giving depths to even the simplest of scenes. Gasp in awe as Cheesy runs across the roof tops, laugh in excitement when he surfs along the sewers on top of a leaf, and shriek with exhilaration as the rascally rodent speeds down the mines in a rickety cart! Of course, making a complete idiot of yourself by yelling enthusiastically at Cheesy isn't compulsory, but it does at least show you're getting the most from the game!



**CHEESY THE MOUSE** FEATURES A COMBINATION 2D AND 3D SECTIONS, THE LATTER BEING PLAYED FROM CHEESY'S PERSPECTIVE. RIDE A LEAF IN THE SEWERS OR RISK YOUR LIFE IN THE MINE CART. CLIMB UP THE CHIMNEY AND YOU'RE TREATED TO A NEBULUS-STYLE PLATFORM SECTION, WHILE THE ROOFTOPS ARE SIMPLE LEFT-TO-RIGHT ROMPS.



RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	TBA
BY	US GOLD
PLAYERS	1-4
GENRE	SPORTS SIM



After the initial rush of soccer titles for the PlayStation, the number of pixelated players has slowed to a trickle — albeit a constant one. US Gold are the latest league contender as they flex the first of several Olympic-sourced titles for the machine. *Olympic Soccer* invites the player to join the amateur internationals in a bid for soccer supremacy. As in past football games, Brazil, Germany, England and Holland line up against mighty minnows like Chile, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast — but the lack of professional players negates the need for embarrassing variants such as David Splatt and Andy Coal.

Although their title claims to offer motion-captured sprites, US Gold state their main intention with *Olympic Soccer* was to exceed their many rivals in the all-important playability department. Realising that both *Actua* and *FIFA* suffered from several major gameplay faults, US Gold's Banbury-based Silicon Dreams team (who were responsible for the infamous *Fever Pitch* for the 16bit systems) have attempted to recreate the fast-paced action of the Amiga classics, *Kick Off* and *Sensible Soccer*.

As such, although the tiny sprites chest the ball down, pass and shoot like those in every other Sony kickabout to date, everything is done at a much faster pace adding the promised arcade feel to the proceedings.

The version of *Olympic Soccer* we saw was Alpha code (60% complete), but the final game should be on the shelves around the same time as live reports of the games from Atlanta beam into the UK — ie June.

# Olympic Soccer



CORNERS, GOAL KICKS AND FREE KICKS ARE POSITIONED USING A CURSOR TO DETERMINE THE BALL'S DIRECTION.



OLYMPIC SOCCER'S GOALKEEPERS ARE MORE INTELLIGENT THAN MOST — EVEN TIPPING SHOTS PAST THE POST.



A FINE EXAMPLE OF A SHORT CORNER BEING TAKEN.



WHEN THE PLAYERS KICK OFF, THE ACTION ZOOMS IN BEFORE PANNING OUT FOR A BETTER OVERVIEW.



THE LARGE PURPLE MARKER INDICATES THE PLAYER UNDER CONTROL.





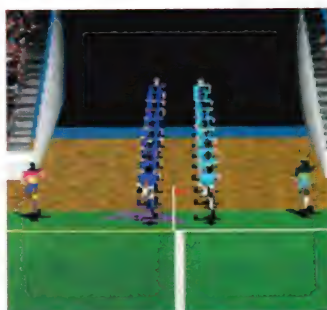


THE AMATEURS SHARE TEAM RANKINGS OF THEIR PRO COUNTERPARTS.



## LIVE FROM ATLANTA

*Olympic Soccer* boasts thirty-two teams who are randomly thrown together in eight groups of four. All the top international sides — Brazil, Argentina, Germany, etc — are represented, but the amateur status of the players means that the likes of Bergkamp, Gascoigne, and Klinsmann are replaced by a bunch of unknowns — although, curiously, the amateur Brazilian eleven still outrank the rest of the world. Up to four players can play *Olympic Soccer*, allowing for two-against-two exhibition matches, or each entrant attempting to guide their chosen team through to the finals against their mates. Alternatively, the game also sports options for one-off matches and mini-leagues, and allows users to save their preferred options down to a memory card.



Group 1

	P	W	D	L	G	P
ARG	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUT	0	0	0	0	0	0
BEL	0	0	0	0	0	0

Group 2

	P	W	D	L	G	P
BRA	0	0	0	0	0	0

Round 1

Group 1

ARG	V	AUS
AUT	V	BEL

Group 2

BRA	V	CHN
CZE	V	DEN



## SOUNDS FAMILIAR

With EA starting the trend for in-game commentary with John Motson, and Gremlin and Psygnosis doing the honours with Barry Davies and Brian Moore respectively, US Gold have added the dulcet tones of Alan Green to *Olympic Soccer*. The voice of Radio 5 Live, Green is on hand with quips and commentary which, even at this early stage, is very impressive indeed. As the action unfolds, the appropriate commentary is streamed from the game CD, with Green naming the majority of the fictitious players, inferring the referee may indeed need to visit an optician, and praising particularly good set-pieces. What worries us, though, is that with all the good commentators now signed up (Capital Gold's Jonathan Pierce has already done the deed for a crappy UBI Soft PC kickabout), it seems likely that Six-o-Six's David Mellor may eventually get a crack of the whip. And while he has the perfect face for radio, the bollocks he talks about football makes this a very worrying thought indeed...



## SMALL-TIME

In keeping with their aim for arcade playability and speed, US Gold's on-screen teams are some of the tiniest player sprites the PlayStation has seen. The game is viewed from an elevated side view, with the 'camera' weaving in and out to keep up with the action. The controls have been kept to a bare minimum, with the facia buttons used to switch control of players, kick and pass, and the developers have tried to make the control system as tight as possible, allowing for first-time shots and headers if the shoot

button is pressed and depending on the ball's height and proximity to the sprite. The goalkeepers are slightly more intelligent than the norm, too, and dive at attackers' feet, jumping into attackers and, for the first time in a soccer game, tipping the ball past the post.

AFTERTOUCH IS PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE IN *OLYMPIC SOCCER*, WITH A TWIST OF THE DPAD ADDING BEND TO EITHER LONG SHOTS OR DRIFTING PASSES — MAKING THE LATTER HARD TO DEFEND AGAINST.





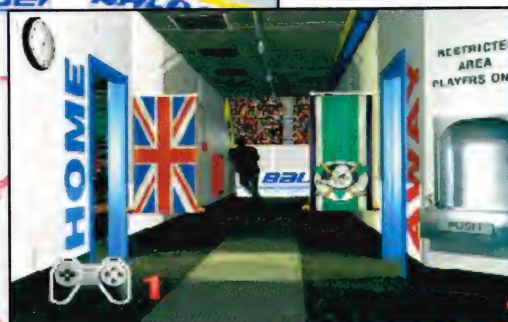
# Powerplay Hockey

RELEASE	JUNE
PRICE	TBA
BY	VIRGIN
PLAYERS	1-6
GENRE	SPORT SIM



Once upon a time, hockey was considered a bit of a sissy's game – cries of 'Jolly Hockey Sticks' and 'Bully Off' summoning up images of the sort of Enid Blyton *Third Year at Mallory Towers* books that your little sister read. Very Thirties, very pre-tentious and very boring. Once upon a time, the only real past-time played on ice was skating. This was mainly the domain of weirdly thin girls in sparkly dresses or camp men in glittering jump suits who danced around together and pretended they had entered a *Come Dancing* competition. Then one day, someone came up with the idea of playing hockey on ice, wrapping players up in ten inches of protective leather, huge sticks waving in the air and iron bars surrounding a face mask. Suddenly ice hockey looked dangerous and aggressive and was cool. Just ask Jason Voorhees, 'hero' of those *Friday 13th* movies.

And so here we have the first ice hockey game for the PlayStation, filling the void left by EA's aborted *National Hockey League* game, complete with international teams and just about every US team you can shake a puck at. To many people, ice hockey seems a raucous and malevolent game, where players are encouraged to be underhand and crafty in their efforts to steal the puck away from their opponents. Regardless of whether this is the case, *PowerPlay Hockey* doesn't go out of its way to paint the sport as a genteel Sunday sport – instead, it says the sport is a fast-moving and action-packed runaround with enough energy and skill to keep players amused for hours.



BETWEEN ONE AND SIX PLAYERS CAN PLAY POWERPLAY HOCKEY, AND GO THROUGH LOCAL MATCHES RIGHT UP TO INTERNATIONAL EVENTS.



HERE WE SEE BOSTON DESPERATELY TRYING TO BEAT SPAIN. OH DEAR...

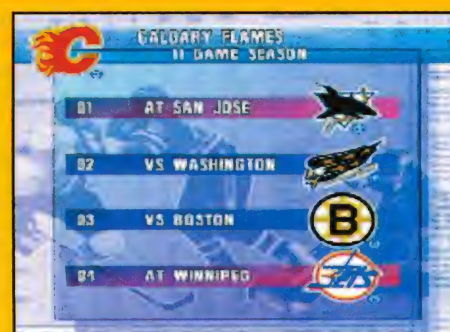


BUT WAIT, LADY LUCK IS SMILING UPON THEM – BUT ONLY FOR NOW AS SPAIN GO ON TO MEET CALGARY.



## ICE AND EASY

There are five different gameplays available. You can start off with just a head-to-head match and then progress on through pre-season knockabouts, a full season, the play-offs and ultimately the world tournament. With six players able to join in, you can create your own leagues and rankings and, if you're feeling really sadistic, just play without the rules – you end up with a massive free-for-all which makes the game resemble *Rollerball* rather than ice hockey.





## ICE HOT, BABY

*Powerplay Hockey* boasts some rather stunning graphics, with the sprites created from motion-captured players, taken from video footage of past league games. Virgin assure us the players ought to react to just about every given action or situation they find themselves in – just like the real thing. No matter who has got the puck, or how often someone careers into someone else, their reactions are promised to be realistic with

precise timing of shots allowing the user to lift the puck in the air from a shot (thus making it harder for the goalkeeper to block), while crunching tackles are doubly effective if the intended victim is smashed against the perimeter wall. Similarly, the US coding team have recreated the inertia experienced when skating on ice, with players turning slower because of the surface, and also due to the bulkiness of their body padding.



## THE ICING ON THE CAKE

There's almost no limit to the teams *Powerplay Hockey* offers the user. Either pick from the American league teams or, if you prefer to opt for a world tournament, you have access to the top teams from around the globe – although it has to be said that the likes of Spain aren't exactly the Kingpins of the ice hockey scene. The game also offers a slight managerial stance, and, by dipping into the Coach menu, the user is given the ability to move the players around within the team, or altering their tactics to concentrate on developing their strengths and examining their weaknesses. A secondary use for the world teams is that each is marked for their effectiveness, with the European teams useful to practice against in the early stages of mastering the controls, while the Canadian teams are amongst the world's very best.



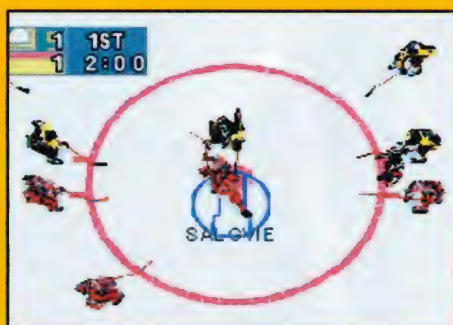
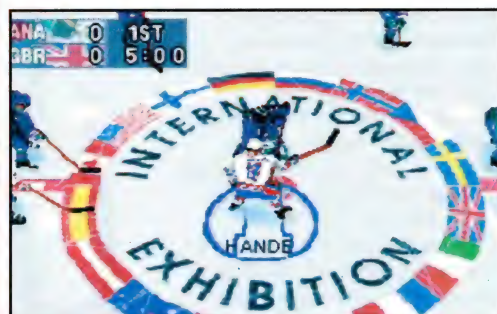
YOU CAN SELECT A TEAM EITHER FROM THE CREAM OF THE US CROP OR RIGHT AROUND THE WORLD.



WHAT A SURPRISE – THE ENGLISH TEAM (SHAME ABOUT THE FLAG) ARE LOSING. OUR WORLD REPUTATION STAYS THE SAME, THEN.

## ICE SPY

A variety of point-of-views are available, as the camera pans around the pitch, following the hockey players and smoothly altering the image to give the best possible advantage. Avoiding the 'set' camera views the majority of football games opt for, *Powerplay Hockey*'s camera is a free-falling system, whereby the action is enhanced for close-range battles and 'bully offs', while long passes are shown via a more distant view, and allowing the player to keep an eye on possible interception opportunities.





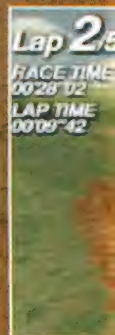
RELEASE	JULY
PRICE	TBA
BY	WARNER
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	RACING



uring the Amiga's heyday, Graftgold were the premier developers for the machine. In the course of the machine's two-year peak, Graftgold produced an arcade-perfect conversion of *Rainbow Islands*, updated their C64 classic, *Uridium*, and entered the polygon domain with *Sepulcra*. With the advent of the console boom though, the Witham-based developers took something of a backseat, opting to stick with Commodore's failing machine in a somewhat misjudged move. Now, however, their close ties with Warner – through Renegade, the last leading light of the Amiga market – have borne 'Next Generation' fruit as Warner and Graftgold unveil *Moto X* for the PlayStation.

Recreating all the thrills and (inevitable) spills of dirt-bike racing, *Moto X* is set across a selection of the world's most arduous mountain courses – allowing for snow and cliff-edge scenarios – as the player competes against seven CPU-controlled opponents or a mate via a link-up cable. The game is viewed in the first-person behind the player's bike, with two switchable points available using the circle button. Each race is set across a predetermined number of laps, with the winner awarded a cash bonus and a guaranteed place in the next round. Three difficulty levels (in the form of leagues) are also on offer, with the player beginning as a junior and progressing to larger and faster bikes. All that's missing is the dulcet tones of Peter Dinklage.

**THE HIGH-POWERED BIKES PROVE A TAD UNRESPONSIVE FOR THE SMALL TRACKS' TIGHT CORNERS.**





## VROOM WITH A VIEW

If the supplied leagues and tracks prove too stifling, Graftgold have added a track editor from which new creations can be saved to a memory card. Via a simple icon system, the user is invited to determine the shape of the track, raise key areas for jumps and bumps, and even add surface detail. Each menu opens to a secondary set of icons, allowing virtually every aspect of the track to be altered — you can even determine where in the world your winding masterpiece will be set. As far as we know, this is the first construction kit to grace a PlayStation title, and congratulations go to Graftgold for making it so simple yet to comprehensive. It also benefits Warner by adding to the longevity of the title.

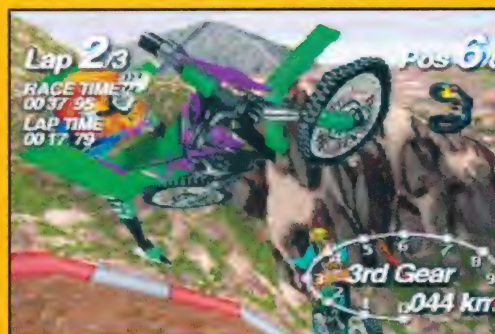


## MOTORBIKIN'

The undulating courses make the most of the PlayStation's 3D capabilities, as the riders leap from peak to peak or skid around incredibly tight corners. The courses in the 50% complete version we played were simplistic affairs in a rough circular or square shape, and each race begins with the eight riders on a starting grid. The courses themselves take the player across three English tracks, into Switzerland, a general tour of Europe, and eventually into Asia and the US. Using the X button to rev the bike, the racers then stream away with the player's current position indicated at the top-right of the screen. From here, the familiar basic racing game rules apply in the mad dash around the course, with the bike slowing down if it leaves the track, and crashes into other riders an inevitability. The first past the post is then deemed the winner, and a prize table sorts the men from the boys in order of the cash won.



**STRANGELY, AS THE BIKES CORNER IT IS THE ENTIRE VEHICLE THAT TURNS — NOT JUST THE WHEEL!**



**THE REPLAY MODE** ALLOWS THE USER TO SWITCH TO A NUMBER OF EXTERNAL VIEWPOINTS.



**CORNERING IS MADE EVEN HARDER AS OTHER BIKERS CUT YOU UP.**



## TO CUT A LONG STORY...

Moto X offers the player 125, 350 or 500cc bikes, with the latter proving rather too powerful for the winding first stages. During the development of the game, Graftgold have also slipped in a few short-cuts for the more eagle-eyed boy racers. Whereas the majority of race games keep the player on the straight and narrow via a series of 'force fields' Moto X exists in a real 3D world and leaving the track allows for a quick trek across the rough terrain surrounding the course as you attempt to slip ahead of the pack. While this is a decidedly illegal move and breaks every rule, it also provides a quick way to reduce the length of a lap — if you can find the right trails, that is...









# GOING FOR GOLD

**W**ith the 1996 Atlanta Olympics looming on the horizon the first details of the inevitable flock of Olympic tie-ins are beginning to emerge. Konami, US Gold and Virgin are under starters orders as *PlayStation Plus* prepares to fire the starter's pistol.

The Olympics are a bit like school sports days, but for adults with trendy track suits. There are all the same events, the runners' mums cheer from the sidelines and everyone gets a beaker of orange squash at the finish. In fact it's only the trainers that differ. The kids stand proud in a pair of Liverpool football shorts and Dunlop Green Flashes, while the pros wear ultra-light super-sneakers boasting virtually useless features such as monodynamic Xenon cushioned soles and self-tying fibreglass laces.

Still, in 776BC when the very first Olympic Games was held in ancient Greece, most of the athletes ran bare foot. Even through the constant warfare and invasion threats the Olympics were held every four years, until they were banned in AD 394. Of course, this ban was eventually lifted but it wasn't until 1896 that the first modern-day Olympics was held, at Athens in Greece. Since then the Olympics has remained a celebration of arts as well as athletics, of society as well as sport, running every four years interrupted only by the first and second World Wars. Now celebrating its centenary, the Olympics skips across the Atlantic from 1992's Barcelona games to Atlanta in the big ol' US of A. As is tradition, a swarm of video game tie-ins are planned to coincide with the Olympics, with US Gold leading the pack with its two officially endorsed *Olympic Games* and *Olympic Soccer* titles. Konami also joins the battle for Olympic gold with its '96 update of the first ever athletics video game, *Track and Field*. With the raw power of PlayStation at their command will we at last see a game that captures the essence of the Olympics, or are these young hopefuls nothing more than mere cash-ins?





**T**his summer the Olympic Games are once again hosted by America, being held in Atlanta, Georgia. Celebrating its 100th anniversary, the modern day games is a huge festival of sport and culture, with around 170 nations competing in over 250 events. If past competitions are anything to go by the highlights won't just be the breaking of records or the winning of medals, but also the spectacular opening ceremony that marks the commencement of the Games with the lighting of the Olympic torch.

Just as the Olympics represents the pinnacle of athletic achievement, the Olympic tie-ins competing this summer are hoping to capture the spirit of the real thing. Backed by the power of the PlayStation, the forthcoming titles from Virgin, Konami and US Gold will be a tremendous leap forward from the past classics such as *Track and Field*, in terms of presentation and the numerous events featured at least. Advanced techniques such as motion-capture and detailed texture-mapping make the games more realistic than ever, with life-like digital athletes competing for the all-important binary gold medal.

But while the numerous Olympic tie-ins may look much closer to the real thing than ever before, do they have the same competitive edge? Are difficult events like the javelin, hammer-throwing or even fencing real tests of skill, as in real life, or are they purely an exercise in rapid button-tapping and luck. Whatever, the battle between the three software giants this summer looks to be as exciting as the Olympic Games themselves.

## OLYMPIC FACTS

One of the most popular spectator events of the ancient Olympic Games was chariot racing, in which dozens of four-horse teams charged along an undivided track, trying to avoid colliding with each other and skidding around a turning post at each end of the straight.

The Olympic Torch relay was introduced in 1936, when 3,000 runners carried torches from Olympia in Greece, to the host city of Berlin.



# OLYMPIC GAMES



In keeping with tradition, US Gold is again responsible for producing the only officially-endorsed Olympics tie-ins. As well as *Olympic Soccer* (previewed on page 36) US Gold also plans to release *Olympic Games*, an arcade-style sports simulation featuring a varied selection of track and field events featured in this summer's Games. The game is currently being developed by Banbury coding team Silicon Dreams, the people behind *Fever Pitch Soccer* on the Mega Drive as well as the *Olympic Soccer* game.

Although US Gold was keen to make *Olympic Games* more of a realistic sports simulation than an frantic joystick wrecker, Silicon Dreams eventually reverted to old-style button-tapping purely to make the game more exciting. The game promises to be all the better for it too, and coupled with the eight-way simultaneous play (using two multitaps and a load of joypads) *Olympic Games* looks like being one of the most competitive sports games on the PlayStation.

But what of the races? *Olympic Games'* competition roster is long and varied, starting with de rigueur track events such as the 100-metre dash and 400-metre sprint. On the field, competitors are challenged to the long, triple and high jumps, as well as the pole vault, discus, javelin and hammer throw. Freestyle swimming, weightlifting and fencing are the three indoor sports while archery, rapid-fire pistol and skeet (ie clay pigeon) shooting complete the tournament.

Pushing the PlayStation to its limits, *Olympic Games* boasts detailed 3D graphics, with each of the athletes modelled from polygons and then texture-mapped and Gouraud-shaded to give them a life-like appearance. A television-style commentary will also feature in the game, ensuring the game's overall style and presentation remains as authentic as possible. Whether the gameplay will be as polished remains to be seen, when *Olympic Games* is released in July.





## OLYMPIC GOLD



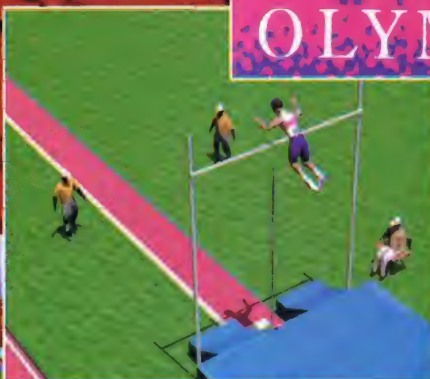
US Gold has always led the (track and) field when it comes to sports games, when the Birmingham company released *Summer and Winter Games* on the Epyx label back in the mid-Eighties. However, it wasn't until the Nineties that it snapped up the official licence to the Games, releasing the software tie-in of the 1992 Barcelona games and also the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer. Although both were crammed with events and were enjoyable enough they failed to capture the true spirit of the Olympics and the events surrounding them. US Gold is hoping all this will change with the Atlanta '96 conversion.



**OLYMPIC GAMES IS CRAMMED WITH RENDERED CUTSCENES.**



**OLYMPIC GAMES BOASTS THE MOST EVENTS - 15 IN ALL.**



## OLYMPIC FACTS

The record for most gold medals won by an athlete in any single Olympic Games is held by Mark Spitz. The American swimmer scooped an impressive seven gold medals in the 1972 Olympics in Munich, although the record for most medals in any one Games is held by the USSR's Aleksandr Ditiatin, who grabbed eight gymnastics medals in the Moscow Olympics in 1980.



FEATURE





## OLYMPIC FACTS

The first ever Olympic Games was held in 776 BC in Olympia, and consisted of just one event, the 192-metre dash. It was won by Koroibos, a cook from the nearby village of Elis.

22-year-old Bob Beamon broke the long jump world record in Mexico City's 1968 Games, jumping 29 feet, two and a half inches to break the existing record by almost two feet. The record remained unbroken for a staggering 23 years.



## THE LEGACY OF THE OLYMPICS

Konami kick started the Olympic craze with the *Track and Field* coin-op, released in 1984, coinciding with the Los Angeles Games. Consisting of eight events including the 100-metre dash, long jump, and the shot-put, it allowed two people to compete against each other or the CPU. Konami followed up *Track and Field* in 1985 with *Hypersports*, again an Olympics game but one that focused on less popular events such as Clay Pigeon shooting and cycling. *Track and Field 2* returned to the running circuit with events like, but unfortunately none of *Track and Field* games were ever converted to the home computer.

Epyx was the first software company to release an Olympics game, on the then-hugely successful Commodore 64, releasing the excellent *Summer Games* which proved incredibly successful. Epyx then enjoyed continued success with the emphasis on

spin-offs, including *Summer Games 2*, *Winter Games 1* and *2*, *Summer Olympics*, *Winter Olympics* and also *World Games*, a odd collection of events such as log rolling and barrel jumping.

The first sports game on the ZX Spectrum was Daley Thompson's *Decathlon*, a home computer rip-off of the *Track and Field* coin-op. Ocean's attempt to recreate the success of the original failed with *Daley Thompson's Superstar Challenge*, an odd mishmash of events including slalom-skiing which, of course, was always a firm favourite of Daley's. Maybe. Countless other sports games appeared including a conversion *Brain Jacks' Superstars* and *Decathlon* on the Atari 800, which featuring the a gruelling 1500-metres slog of button-tapping and joystick waggling. Erk. At least the new era of Olympic simulations aren't as tiring as the real thing.

## INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD

Konami's Olympic competitor comes from a thoroughbred pedigree and is the distant relative of the game that kick-started the sports game revolution back in the early Eighties. *International Track and Field* is of course the new-born cousin of the archaic coin-op of the same name and contains all eight events that appeared original, to the frantic button-bashing of the 100-metre dash to the more skillful shot-put and high jump. New events include freestyle swimming, a sport that featured in *Hypersports*.

But while the events essentially remain the same, visually it has been greatly enhanced. The game has been created completely in 3D, from the polygon-based runners to the animated backgrounds. Some excellent examples of the attention to detail are the various water sports events. Thanks to the PlayStation's ability to create transparent colours and lighting the swimmers can be seen kicking furiously as they surge for victory, while the water itself and even the colourful lane dividers gently bob up and down.

One of the most unique features that *International Track and Field* boasts is its wide variety of camera angles that constantly update to ensure each of the competitors, of which up to four can be controlled by a human, appears on screen at all times. If the athletes are bunched closely together the view will close in to show the race in greater detail. However, should one of the runners fall back from the pack, the camera automatically zooms out to keep each of them in shot.

Developed by Konami's research and development department in Japan, *International Track and Field* is the first title from Konami to use motion-capture. It's looks pretty good too, and should be even better when it's released in July. Of course, it faces stiff competition from US Gold's endorsed Olympics game, but you don't have to be official to be good as *PlayStation Plus* so easily proves.





## 3D DECATHLON

Virgin's bid for Olympic gold isn't scheduled to compete until late 1996, but so far the game is shaping up very nicely indeed. Developed in America by Virgin US, *3D Decathlon* will include all the main events of the Olympics, including 110-metre hurdles, 100-metre dash, the javelin and a varied selection of other track and field events. If the preliminary sketches are anything to go by the game will be crammed with smart rendered graphics and cutscenes, although Virgin has yet to confirm whether motion-capture technology will be used to animate the athletes. With the game still over six months away from completion, Virgin has the luxury of checking out the competition and without the pressures of strict deadlines *3D Decathlon* can therefore be honed to perfection. As ever, *PlayStation Plus* will endeavour to bring any firm details of the game when they're eventually released.



**VIRGIN'S 3D DECATHLON IS STILL A LONG WAY FROM COMPLETION BUT, JUDGING BY THESE RENDERERS, IT SHOULD BE VERY GOOD INDEED.**



**DETAILS OF 3D DECATHLON ARE VERY SKETCHY AT THE MOMENT. THESE RENDERED CUTSCENES ARE JUST A FLAVOUR OF WHAT TO EXPECT, AS THERE ARE NO ACTUAL IN-GAME SHOTS AVAILABLE AS YET.**



## GOTCHA!

Konami has concentrated on making *International Track and Field* one of the most visually realistic sport simulations to date. Like so many PlayStation games of late motion-capture techniques have been used to great effect and so the animation of the athletes is fluid and life-like, even more so than *Actua Soccer* and *Total NBA*.



**THANKS TO MOTION-CAPTURE, THE ANIMATION IS SURPRISINGLY REALISTIC.**







## CRUELTY TO JOYPADS

A word of financial advice: forget the National Lottery and quickly snap up as many shares in PlayStation joypads as when the Konami and US Gold Olympic games are released in the summer, pad sales are sure to rocket. Why? No other game is as strenuous on the buttons as an athletics simulation. In both *International Track and Field* and *Olympic Games*, races are won by rapidly tapping the buttons, and even though the PlayStation pad is durable enough it can only take so much punishment.

Field events are less demanding, with success at shot-put and javelin primarily down to timing rather than speed. To win the shot must be thrown at the correct angle, ideally at forty-five degrees. Deviate from this angle of attack and the throw will fall short. The high, long and triple jump are all pretty much the same too, the player building up speed by tapping the button then determining the angle at which the athlete takes off. Again, forty-five degrees is perfect.



AFTER A PARTICULARLY IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE IN US GOLD'S OLYMPIC GAMES, YOU'RE TREATED TO A COOL CUTSCENE.

## UNDER STARTER'S ORDERS

Both Konami's *International Track and Field* and the officially endorsed *Olympic Games* from US Gold are due for release in the summer, waging a war that could rival the Blur/Oasis battle of last year. Both

games feature pretty much the same line-up of events, but each tackles them in a slightly different way. *PlayStation Plus* compares the two favourites for gold in Atlanta '96.

### INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD

#### Track Events



UP TO FOUR PEOPLE CAN COMPETE IN INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD...

#### Field Events



KONAMI'S OLYMPIC COME! HAS 11 EVENTS IN TOTAL...

#### Swimming



MOTION-CAPTURE HAS BEEN USED THROUGHOUT TRACK AND FIELD...

### OLYMPIC GAMES



OLYMPIC GAMES, ON THE OTHER HAND, CAN BE PLAYED BY EIGHT PEOPLE.



...WHERE AS US GOLD'S CONTENDER HAS A WHOPPING 15!



...WHILE OLYMPIC GAMES IS PACKED FULL OF RENDERED CUTSCENES.

## OLYMPIC FACTS

Anyone fancy a bite to eat? Podgy (overweight?) Soviet weightlifter Vassily Alexeyev prepared himself for each competition by breakfasting on a massive steak and a staggering twenty-six fried eggs! Oi, fat bloke! You wanna cut down on your pork life, mate, get some exercise!





INVESTIGATION HAS NEVER  
BEEN SO MYSTERIOUS...

# Jack is Back

THE  FILES

24th December, 1924  
Hell's Kitchen, California ...

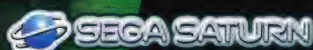
"The further I went, the worse the smell got ... The air was thick with the sickening stench of putrefaction. The floor was getting slippery and dangerous. Suddenly I lost my footing! I scrambled for a hand-hold but it was no use. Was I, Edward Carnby, Supernatural Private-Eye, heading for Santa heaven or was I just toilet-bound?"

CASE NO.3 "SMELL FROM HELL"



The continuing adventures of Edward Carnby can be found in: **ALONE IN THE DARK**

THE TRUTH IS OUT NOW



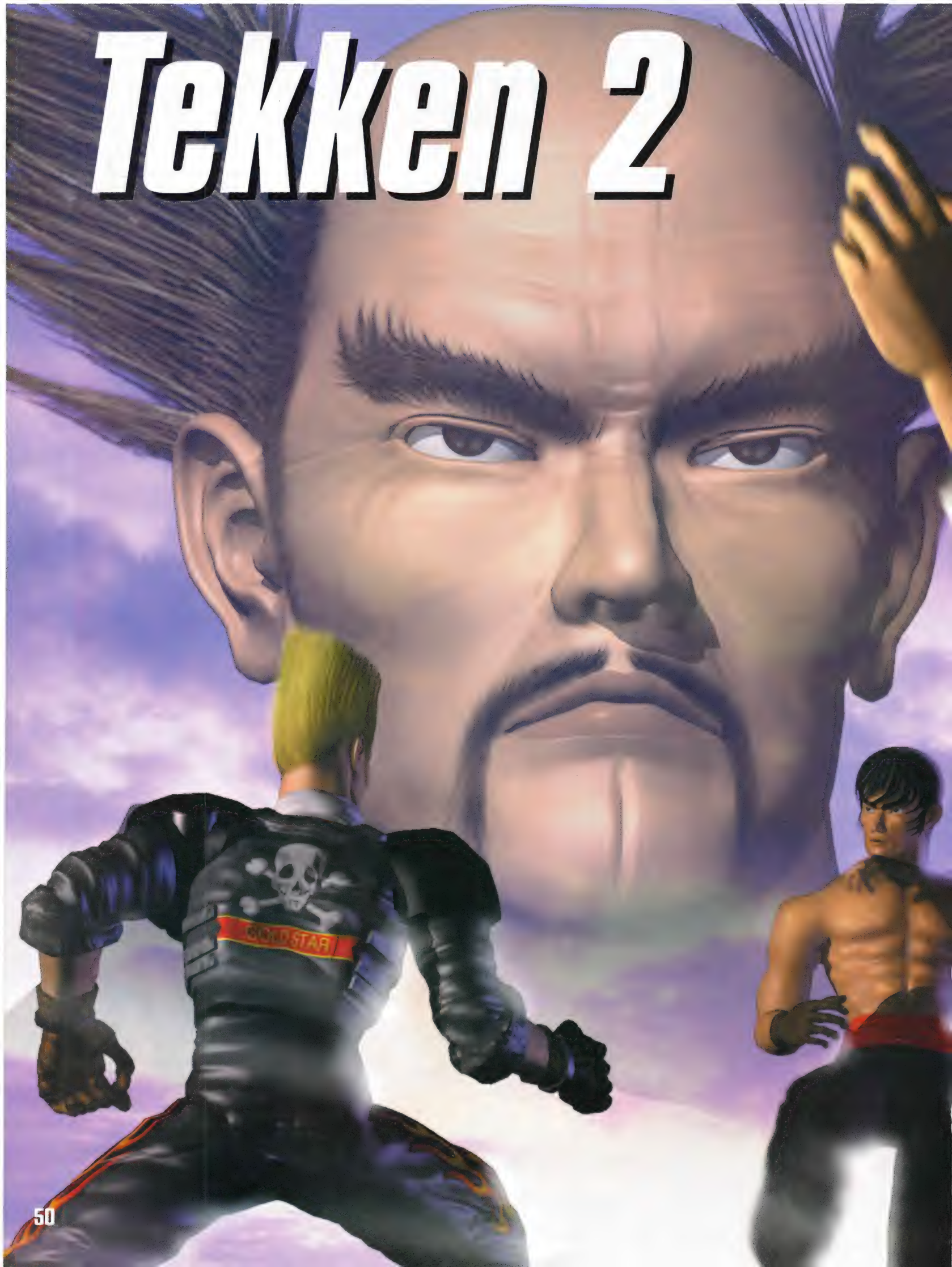
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# Tekken 2







## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM  
CONTINUES: INFINITE  
SKILL LEVELS: 4

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

PRICE TBA

BY NAMCO

PLAYERS 1-2



**T**ekken 2, eh? It seems only yesterday that I saw the first Tekken game — and what a moment that was. The days of two-dimensional, flat and lifeless beat 'em ups were over in a flash. Sure, *Virtua Fighter* had been around and changed the way people approached the genre of fighting games, but never before had such frighteningly lifelike human facsimiles appear on our screens. There are very few games that I can enjoy for hours without actually playing, but *Tekken* remains a game that I can quite happily just sit back and watch being played for days.

And here we are already, with what could arguably be the game of the year for PlayStation users. As you'd expect from the sequel to the best PlayStation beat 'em up, things have only got better; with superior technology driving even more realistic character representations,

and a superb control technique to be studied and mastered to the point of obsession.

All of your favourite *Tekken* characters are back, sporting new outfits and showing off with stunning new animated victory stances. Each fighter retains a number of their original moves — allowing practised *Tekken* players a certain familiarity — plus a whole host of new, improved techniques.

To complement and challenge these original characters, there are also a number of new fighters to play with, each specialising in combat styles new to the game. If you can't take out an opponent using standard karate moves, perhaps you need to think about approaching the fight using the skills and attitude of a Sumo wrestler. If Kazuya is giving you more grief than you need, why not take on the form of a bear and beat the crap out of him? The choice, as they say, is yours...





## HEIHACHI MISHIMA

**Nationality:** Japanese  
**Fighting Style:** Mishima School Karate  
**Sub-Boss:** Lee Chao Lan  
**Home Scene:** Mountain Dojo

The original 'Big Boss' of *Tekken* returns in *Tekken 2* as a player character, and a pretty good one at that. Most of Heihachi's moves are relatively straightforward, making him an excellent fighter to start with, while his main speciality is hitting people while they 'float' (ie while still in the air after a major hit). Regular *Tekken* players will be pleased to know that Heihachi retains his neck-breaking throw along with the ever popular Thunder God Fist, while particularly nasty new additions include a brilliant throw from behind that smashes the opponent down on his knee, resulting in shattered pelvises and much writhing in agony on the floor.



## DESTRUCTIVE FISTS



## PAUL PHOENIX

**Nationality:** American  
**Fighting Style:** Judo and various Martial Arts  
**Sub-Boss:** Kuma  
**Home Scene:** Manhattan Pier

Paul Phoenix appears to be one of the most improved characters from the original roster. His overall technique is more powerful, while impressive throws and excellent counter moves complete his overhaul. Other slight changes have been made to improve his combinations, allowing alterations to the height of hits; thus making his chained-moves less easy to block effectively. Paul is also able to take down opponents more effectively by tackling from close range (rather than running from distance) making the 'punch people in the face while pinned' move that much more enjoyable.

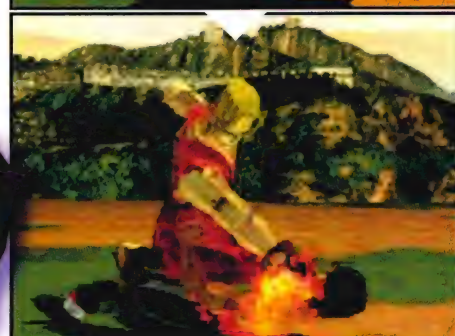


**THE PHOENIX SMASHER IS ALWAYS A GOOD ONE FOR CLEARING THE SCREEN!**





## ULTIMATE TACKLE



ONCE AGAIN, PAUL'S POWER PUNCH GETS HIM OUT OF TROUBLE AND SENDS NINA INTO ORBIT!



## JUN KAZAMA

Nationality: Japanese  
Fighting Style: Bu-Jitsu  
Sub-Boss: Wang Jinrey  
Home Scene: English countryside

Jun is a new arrival on the *Tekken* scene, and as such is one of the most nimble of the fighters on offer. She has a number of unique combinations, throws and speedy moves, including cartwheels and pirouettes that allow her to spin around opponents, disorientating them and opening up their defences for powerful kicks. Like Law, Jun has a number of easily executed multi-hitting combinations — such as the Motion Cutting Legs, which gives a high kick followed by three fast sweeps, and so catching opponents out. Her greatest strength comes in the ability to chain so many moves together, forcing fighters to rely on fast reflexes for blocking rather than simply learning your set combinations.

**LITTLE JUN KAZAMA** MAY LOOK A SWEET, BUT SHE KNOWS HOW TO HURT A MAN.



## ARM CROSS HOLD





## LEI WULONG

**Nationality:** Chinese  
**Fighting Style:** Chinese Martial Arts  
**Sub-Boss:** Bruce Irvin  
**Home Scene:** Hong Kong rooftop

Another new fella on the scene, Lei is a right old cheese miester, throwing tons of fast kicks and punches at you left right and centre. He also sports an incredibly unique (ie weird) technique that involves voluntarily laying on the floor, rolling around for a bit, and then springing up with a number of low and high spinning attacks on command. He also turns around with his back to you, accessing more spinning surprise moves. Lei's main strength is his unpredictability, and only an opponent with sharp reflexes and fast counters will survive.

HE'S A COP AND HE'S CHINESE. HE IS 'CHINESE COP'. SHOWING IN A CINEMA NEAR YOU.



## LEAPING UP



## MICHELLE CHANG

**Nationality:** American  
**Fighting Style:** Kempo  
**Sub-Boss:** Ganryu  
**Home Scene:** Howling Wolf Canyon

Not the most instant of characters to play with, Michelle warrants some serious playing time. She sports some of the fastest kicks in the game, and coupled with powerful uppercuts and the fact that that aforementioned kicks can be varied in height, she is excellent for floating attacks. Michelle also has a number of new throws to play with (a rectified weakness from the original *Tekken*) as well as superb unstoppable attacks, while her powerful chain combos should break through the hardest of enemy defences.





## GERMAN SUPLEX



**THE PUSH WITH PALM MOVE** NOT ONLY MURDERS UNSUSPECTING OPPONENTS, BUT ALSO STUNS THOSE HIDING BEHIND BLOCKS.



## YOSHIMITSU

**Nationality:** N/A  
**Fighting Style:** Swastika Ninjitsu  
**Sub-Boss:** Kunimitsu  
**Home Scene:** Forest

Yoshimitsu always appeared more of a novelty than anything else in the original *Tekken*, but thanks to some much-improved standard moves and a plethora of weird and wonderful attacks, he appears in *Tekken 2* as a force to be reckoned with. A feature unique to Yoshi' is that he can sit on the floor meditating, recharging his energy bar. This makes him an excellent choice for 'Survival' games as he can sneak a few invaluable chunks of energy back while his opponent is on the floor. He can also teleport out of harm's way while in this position. Yoshi' makes much more use of his sword in *Tekken 2*, with better stabs and swipes, as well as a superb 'face stabbing' attack following a tackle to the floor. The weirdest of all moves, however, is a sacrificial move where Yoshimitsu spins up to his opponent, stands with his back to them, and then thrusts his sword through-out his body and right into theirs. Strange.



## ULTIMATE TAKE-DOWN



**JUST WHEN YOUR OPPONENT THINKS THEY'VE WORKED OUT YOUR TECHNIQUE, WHY NOT ROLL UNDER THEM AND ATTACK WITH A SOLAR KICK.**



## NINA WILLIAMS

**Nationality:** Irish  
**Fighting Style:** Aikido/Various Martial Arts  
**Sub-Boss:** Anna Williams  
**Home Scene:** Grecian Acropolis

If ever there was a character worth spending time with, it's our Nina. For sheer speed of kick and punch chain combos — plus some truly stunning throws and holds — you just can't beat the bitch. Her general moves and combinations remain much as seen in the original *Tekken* (not that there's anything wrong with that!), but when it comes to close play and making use of her Aikido moves, you can expect something pretty special. Don't expect an easy time of it when using her though, as many of the ultra-sexy moves require some real button sequence memorising, with as many as twelve buttons involved for one move!

**WHAT MORE IS THERE TO SAY, APART FROM "GRRRRR!"**



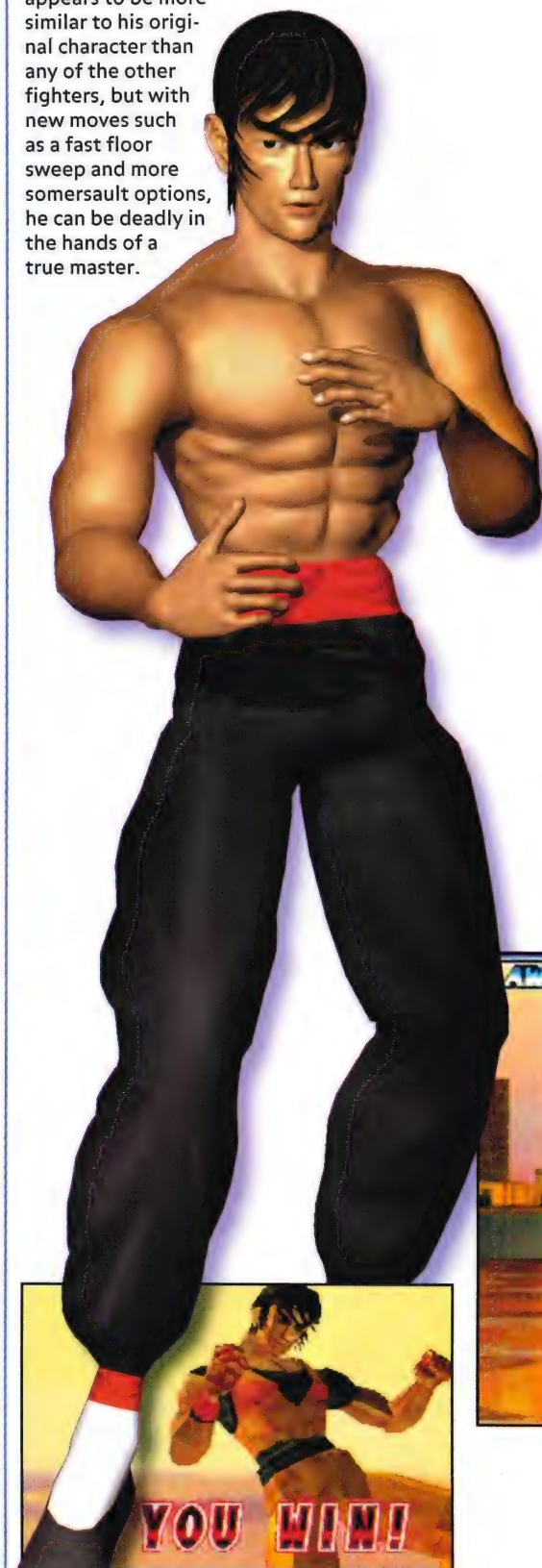
## PALM GRIP



## MARSHALL LAW

**Nationality:** American  
**Fighting Style:** 'Marshall' Arts  
**Sub-Boss:** Baek Doo San  
**Home Scene:** Great Wall of China

Always a favourite with those players who couldn't be bothered to do much more than rapidly pound buttons, Law is also a good character for those wishing to play properly (oh, I'm a pugnacious sod!). Law's somersaults are now a lot easier to perform, and can be added to chain combos at the press of a button (well two actually). He retains his dramatic Dragon Dive 'throw', but can now modify the Face Breaker to smash his opponent into the floor head first. Law actually appears to be more similar to his original character than any of the other fighters, but with new moves such as a fast floor sweep and more somersault options, he can be deadly in the hands of a true master.





## SHAOLIN SPIN KICK



## JACK-2

**Nationality:** Russian  
**Fighting Style:** Mechanical Martial Arts  
**Sub-Boss:** Prototype Jack  
**Home Scene:** Industrial Complex

As was the tradition set in the first *Tekken*, Jack-2 relies on nothing more than pure power and bulk for his technique. He still has devastating power-punches and slams, but his throws and grapples have been modified to include some truly shattering extras. A particular favourite of mine involves Jack-2 grabbing his opponent's neck and throwing them twenty feet into the sky, then standing back and watching as they fall to their doom. He also sports a particularly weird-looking move called the Cossack, where he shuffles across the screen inflicting low kicks. A large and powerful character — *do not* be fooled into thinking he's slow and cumbersome.



## SPRING HAMMER PUNCH



JUST WHEN YOUR OPPONENT IS GETTING SICK OF LAW'S NON-STOP PUNCH AND KICK COMBINATIONS, WHY NOT COMPLETELY SURPRISE THEM WITH A NICE QUICK SOMERSAULT KICK.





## KING

**Nationality:** Mexican  
**Fighting Style:** Wrestling  
**Sub-Boss:** Armour King  
**Home Scene:** Church of St Teresa

King makes for some excellent fights, with a good mixture of standard moves, special moves, and complex throws. He retains many of the moves seen previously — the Frankenstein, the flying dive, the Tombstone Piledriver, etc — as well as the ever-popular Giant Swing. The main source of fun, however, comes from a new wrestling combo named the Mexican. Though an absolute bugger to execute, get this right and you'll see King take his opponent to the floor, then

bundle them up and roll them around on the floor. Get the sequence right and this'll continue until your opponent is dead! Another stonking move involves grabbing their arms and legs, laying on the floor, and then

pressing them up into the air, breaking their back. A very cool fighter.



## GIANT SWING



## COMMENT

### STEVE

Quite simply, *Tekken 2* surpasses all my expectations. Ordinarily, a sequel throws a handful of ideas into a retread of the first game, and while Namco have recreated a lot from the first game, *Tekken 2* out-points its predecessor in every department. There are countless more moves, new characters, and every part of the game has been tinkered with in some way. Graphically, the game is stunning. Gone are the majority of the polygon disappearances which plagued the first game, as larger, chunkier sprites do battle against a wealth of backdrops. Similarly, the animation is more fluid, with the characters rolling into the next move with ease. It is the gameplay, though, that — as it should — really stands out. In addition to the new throws and hits, there are new counter moves to turn an opponent's attack back on them. Not only one of the greatest beat 'em ups, but one of the best games to date.





## SHOWDOWN

So you've done it. You've got through everyone *and* your own sub-boss — now it's time for the big fight. First up it's Kazuya, then you have to defeat the evil Devil character in the mirror room. Achieve this and your reward is a lovely rendered end sequence. Ah, very nice.



STAGE 10

PAUL VS DEVIL



## PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

If you want a bit of time to perfect your technique without having to worry about having your butt kicked continually, enter the Practice mode and select a character to be your personal punch bag. A readout showing your joystick moves appears so that you can see why things aren't happening as you'd like, while combination strings can be printed at the bottom of the screen to give you something to copy.



## TEAM TALK

An excellent new feature used in *Tekken 2* is the Team Battle Mode. This allows you to play with up to eight different characters in a 'winner stays on' tournament. Your energy never replenishes, so though you might beat two of your opponent's fighters with one of yours, you'll start the next round in the state you left the last.



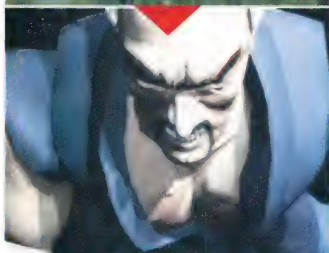


## BOSSING PEOPLE ABOUT

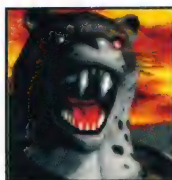
Before you get to go up against Kazuya and his devilish incarnation, you first have to get past your unique sub-boss. Some are familiar (albeit with face-lifts and more solid bodies) while others are long-time listeners, first-time callers. If you know what I mean.

## THE BEGINNING OF THE END

*Tekken 2* goes much further than most sequels, actually bothering to tidying up the story and create a solid link between the original *Tekken* and the next. The end of *Tekken* showed Kazuya throwing his father, Heihachi, off the cliff in a victorious scene. The opening for *Tekken 2* shows Heihachi rising from the ground with nothing on his mind but... *revenge!*



## ARMOUR KING Wrestling

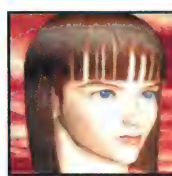


Fairly unsurprisingly, Armour King remains a beefier version of King, with a couple of extra moves at his disposal and a few more powerful throws. His main strength is that he can inflict more damage in a single hit than

King, especial with something like the overhead smash. Even better is his enormous jumping smash and damaging shoulder attack, both of which should be avoided at all costs. Armour King also comes complete with the ever-annoying low-sweeping Ali Kick combos. Bugger.

**THIS IS A HARD HAT AREA! ARMOUR KING STEAMS IN WITH A MASSIVE KNUCKLE BOMBER. TIME TO DIE.**

## ANNA WILLIAMS Aikido / Mishima karate



Not much has changed as far as dress sense goes, but Anna is still a tasty little fighter with a number of interesting variations on Nina's moves list. Get in close and she'll twist your arms about until they practically pop off,

get too far away and she'll either fly in with chained kick combinations or steam in with an unblockable power hit. Perverts will be pleased to know that not only does she juggle her 'chests' at you after a win, but now also waggles her arse!



## KUMA Kuma-Shinken

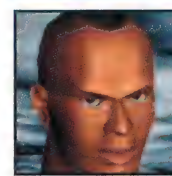


Kuma is the sort of fighter that leaves you wondering where Geoffrey, Zippy and George have gone. As in the original *Tekken*, Kuma remains a hybrid of Jack and Ganryu, with nothing more than sheer power on

his side. Huge swipes and mega-powerful crushes make him a novelty not to be underestimated however, while hard-hitting combinations can catch an unaware opponent for some serious damage. Don't get too close or he'll grab you and munch you. Grrr.



## BRUCE IRVIN Kick Boxing



As you'd probably expect from a kick boxer, Bruce Irving is a fast fighter, choosing to keep things pretty simple as far as technique goes. Bruce likes to rely on big powerful punches which augment an otherwise snappy

repertoire of moves – with some almost Sagat-like knee and hold attacks. Not the easiest of characters to get up to strength with, but a powerful and dangerous sub-boss to come up against when in the hands of the CPU.



## KUNIMITSU Swastika Ninjitsu



And representing the crap fighters... Yes it's hard to see why Kunimitsu is still in here, because as far as I can see she's extremely out classed as far as moves and power go. A glance at the number of moves avail-

able for her shows that she's extremely short compared to pretty much every other fighter, and apart from a couple of unblockable knife hits, she just doesn't have what it takes. While she does have a pretty good speed, she's simply battle fodder.





## BAEK DOO SAN Tae Kwon Do



A right bugger with his feet, Baek is fast, powerful, and an absolute master of the chain combination. Get caught off guard by a couple of stun kicks and you can be sure of eating a fast combo before you get the chance to even vaguely recover. His particular technique features a move called the Flamingo, where he first lifts his leading leg and then, depending upon which sequence is being used, goes into a fast combination using either fast snap-py jab kicks, or huge slam kicks. Keep back.

**YOU'D BEST GET USED TO THIS: BAEK LIKES TO USE HIS KICKS ALMOST NON-STOP, PRODUCING MAJOR COMBOS.**

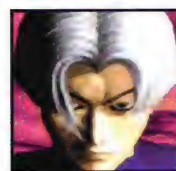
## GANRYU Sumo



Though fairly limited as far as moves go, Ganryu has a very complete set of throws and lifts, and is also very good at getting opponents into the air and keeping them there for floating follow-on attacks. He comes complete with tons of slaps and mega-powerful charges, and can break through even the hardest of defences with such delights as the Megaton Thrust, the Thunder Slap, and the cellulite-packed Four Thigh Quake. An annoying fat boy.



## LEE CHAO LAN Mishima Karate



In the heat of battle, Lee Chao Lan doesn't appear to have evolved all that much from his original Tekken appearance. He certainly moves with a frightening fluidity and has a few more power moves to his repertoire, but other than the ability to chain moves together well and make use of his unique Infinity kick combo, Lee is a generally unremarkable fighter. One particularly groovy move worth mentioning is the Silver Cyclone that unleashes some major hits.



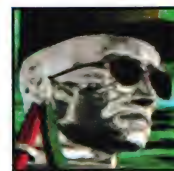
## WANG JINREY Shini-Roku-Go-ken



A popular fella from the original Tekken, Wang is an excellent little fighter and a character you want to get your hands on as soon as possible. Apart from having all the speedy combinations of Michelle Chang, Wang has some powerful charging moves, and is a dab hand at the counter-moves. He is also tremendously annoying as far as catching opponents out with low sweeps and combination punches goes. An extremely feisty old git, and no mistakin'.



## PROTOTYPE JACK Mechanical Martial Arts



As with the original Tekken game, the Prototype Jack is simply a more basic Jack-2, with a less human appearance, a few moves missing, and a couple of unique moves that, shall we say, didn't make it into the final product. As well as employing some extremely powerful hits, Prototype Jack can launch headfirst into opponent's guts, and fly into the sky before landing feet first on his opponent. You can also expect all the usual hilarious Jack shenanigans.



## COMMENT

### MATT

Folks, this is something very very special indeed. The original Tekken remains the most worn out beat 'em up in our games drawer, and whenever I get together with my mates it's generally saved 'till last simply because we know that once loaded, it'll be on for a while. To describe the impact Tekken 2 has on you initially is, however, impossible. The renders are second to none, and the in-game graphics are fast, smooth, realistic and animated to an incredible level or accuracy. The new characters are excellent, while the new improved moves make the known characters open up completely. Being able to practice and get involved in team battles is a stroke of genius, while the counter-move system and combo-chaining transform the actual fights. I remember being overwhelmed by Tekken first time round, but with Tekken 2 Namco have rewritten the beat 'em up rules. You'll need to invest some serious time learning all of the moves and combination sequences, but you won't find a more rewarding game anywhere else today.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	93
ANIMATION	93
SOUND FX	95
MUSIC	93
LASTABILITY	93
PLAYABILITY	95
OVERALL	95





## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
CONTINUES: 8  
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE OUT NOW

PRICE IMPORT

BY CAPCOM

PLAYERS 1-2



efore one-on-one beat 'em ups became as plentiful as they are now, there was a time when games

players liked a little exploration with their fights. As with most beat 'em up innovations, Capcom were the first to come up with the idea of exploring a play area while kicking seven shades out of an oddball selection of street hoodlums. *Final Fight* was set in the seedy underbelly of an unnamed US city, where the player opted for one of three characters as they attempted to rescue the Mayor's daughter from the clutches of a 'Mr Big' figure. The game was a massive success spawning two sequels in as many years, and opening the flood gates for even more of the game but in different time zones and scenarios. *Streets of Rage* (two sequels), *Golden Axe* (three sequels), *Double Dragon* (two sequels and a shite movie), and *Dynasty Wars* all appeared in mere months, giving the player the choice of countless heroes battling it out against impossible odds.

Of these, it was Capcom's *Dynasty Wars* that was probably used its scenario to greatest effect. Set in feudal Japan, the coin-op offered the player one of four warriors out to rid their country of the Samurai Mr Big who had invaded. As such, the player had access to a number of martial arts moves, big curvy swords, and even horses to ride! Needless to say, a sequel was commissioned and, early last year, the first PCB was seen. Then, nothing. Capcom's sequel never made it into general release across the UK's arcades, and the revamped *Dynasty Wars* was destined for obscurity. Now, however, Capcom have seen fit to port the code to the PlayStation — presumably figuring that as the PlayStation has yet to see a *Final Fight* clone, we may be missing out somewhat. The mission is pretty much the same, with a new Mr Big overrunning the country with his oddball hordes — but the weapons, horses and moves are bigger and better than ever before. Again.

# Dynasty Wars II

## IT WAS A TIME OF HEROES...



Controlling one of five would-be heroes, *Dynasty Wars II* spans eight, horizontally-scrolling stages. Using the Dpad to move across the screen, the four facia buttons are used to perform basic punches and jumps, while combinations of the two offer a variety of special moves. The levels generally scroll from left to right, with the assorted bandits that make up the enemy hordes appearing in groups of six or seven at a time. However, the screen only scrolls in one direction and should the player wish to go back to collect some missed treasure of weaponry, they will be urged on by a flashing arrow. As the scrapping begins, a number of energy bars appear at the top of the screen. As the hero of the game, the player's energy spans roughly half the screen width and is reduced with every hit conceded, while the considerably shorter yellow bars of the enemy appear with the owners' name beneath. When a foe's energy has been depleted, the sprite flashes indicating his demise, but towards the end of the game the larger enemies appear with different coloured energy bars — which means they can withstand more than one bar depletion before keeling over.

## TO CAP IT ALL...

Just as *Street Fighter* et al contain 'boss' characters at the end of their rounds, *Dynasty Wars II* also plays host to a selection of larger sprites designed solely to stop the player reaching the next stage. Surrounded by hordes of their minions, the bosses range from Hyo-Cho who is armed with a ridiculously-sized mallet, Son-Jin who wields a mace linked to an extending chain. Towards the end of the game's eight stages, though, the bosses get progressively tougher — equipped with over four, full energy bars — with Kakou-Tou and his fire-breathing skills and knife-throwing expert Chou-Ryou proving particularly hard to dispatch.



LEAPING PROVES TO BE THE ONLY WAY TO COUNTER RUSH ATTACKS FROM THE ENEMY.

A FIRE-BREATHING BOSS ENDS THE THIRD STAGE.







FLYING KICKS CAN FELL SEVERAL FOES.



THE GAME FEATURES A RUNNING PLOT, WITH KAN-U SHOWING HIS SOFT SIDE BY RESCUING A YOUNG MOTHER AND HER BABY.

CHOU-UN STUNS ALL COMERS USING AN OVER-SIZED HAMMER.

THROWING IS EFFECTED WHEN TACKLING AN OPPONENT AT CLOSE RANGE.

THE AGING ARCHER SHOWS US HIS BOLAS. IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT.



THE FOURTH BOSS AND HIS MASSIVE AXE.



THE LARGER BOSSES COME EQUIPPED WITH ENERGY BARS WHICH TAKE SEVERAL MINUTES TO FULLY DEplete.



EACH LEVEL MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN A STRICT TIME-LIMIT.

## HERO WORSHIP

Before the battle begins, one or two players are invited to select a combatant from the five available. Each fighter is equipped with different weapons and abilities — including bow and arrows or bare knuckles — and can be replaced with another using the in-game credit system for extra lives. Similarly, each character has a special move effected using the circle button, but using it depletes the character's energy slightly.

### KAN-U

A nautical-looking fellow, with all the typical pirate trade-marks — ie a big black beard, and a head scarf. Initially unarmed, Kan-U is an excellent bare knuckle fighter, with a neat sideline of assorted throws and head butts.



### CHOU-HI

Looking as if he's wandered off the set of an episode of *Grizzly Addams*, Chou-Hi is another bare-knuckle hero — but considerably stronger than the rest. His throwing skills are unsurpassed, and he proves surprisingly agile for his size.



### CHOU-UN

The *Dynasty Wars II* all-rounder. With a huge sword, and a superb mix of slashing and punching moves, Chou-Un's only weakness is his lack of strength. Enemy hits deplete his energy rapidly, which means that finding him a horse is essential.



### KOU-CHUU

The oldest entrant, and armed with a bow and arrow to pick off oncoming foes. While his arrows are suitably deadly, his firing rate is a tad slow leaving him open to close-quarters attack — although his bolas skills are good for getting out of tight corners.



### GI-EN

Another sword-wielding hero, and the only character for the discerning player. His stocky build and sword skills make him a formidable fighter, and Gi-En's most impressive move is impaling a foe on his sword and subsequently tossing them over his head.





## COMMENT

MATT

It has to be said that while these games (and by that I mean the genre of game that involves walking along beating up a seemingly endless supply of baddies) offer no particularly unique or specific game treats, they still seem to be pretty good fun. Having a few characters means that you'll at least play long enough to find out what the differences between them all are, and by the time you have seen all these, you'll probably just keep playing because you've got so far you want to finish the damn thing. No, *Dynasty Wars II* isn't a true Next Generation console game, but it's certainly more fun than many of the games we have seen so far for the PlayStation. Ultimately I would only bother recommending this game to you if you have a mate to hand and fancy a muck about, but as for lasting play and challenging strategy, I think you might have to look elsewhere. By no means the best import we've seen (and boy have the majority been stinkers!) but a fair laugh.

## TUCK IN

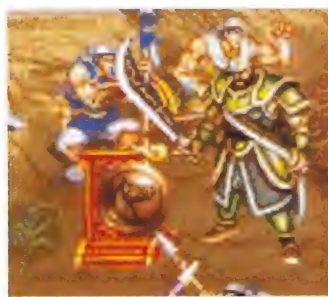
In between key points in the running battle, light relief is offered via two rather bizarre sub-games. Having dispatched a couple of early bosses, one of the other heroes challenges the player to an eating contest. The screen duly changes to view the two contestants sitting at a table with a plate of chicken in front of them. Rolling the Dpad in a circular direction while hammering the buttons prompts the character to wolf the food down, and the first to clear his plate wins bonus points. Similarly, just before jumping on a series of burning boats, the player is invited to chop up as many wooden effigies as possible within a strict time-limit for more bonuses.



## MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE

Located along the top of the scrolling pathways are a number of barrels, chests and crates. Using whatever comes to hand in the midst of battle, smashing open these reveals a goodie or power-up of some variety within. Items such as books and stashes of gold equate to extra points, but an assortment of food items – bread rolls, chicken legs, and even a cooked lobster – are also on hand to replenish lost energy. More useful, though, are the weapons which are automatically put into use when collected. These include axes which provide copious splashes of orange(!) blood, a hammer which lands with a satisfying thump, and a collection of knives and blades to put Sheffield Steel to shame.

The rarest of all the icons, however, is the gong and collecting this sends a trusty steed cantering on screen, allowing the player to lash out across a wider range with the pike it carries.



HITTING THE GONG SUMMONS A TRUSTY STEED FOR OUR HERO.



## COMMENT

STEVE

There was a time when you couldn't move for games like this. Scrolling beat 'em ups were a fad, which died when people realised they weren't exactly varied enough to warrant continued play. *Dynasty Wars II* falls into the same traps as *Final Fight* and co by proving to be great fun – but hardly the most taxing game in the world. The trip across feudal Japan sees the user guiding one of five burly heroes into scraps against up to seven sprites at a time. Great. However, after seeing off a couple of dozen gangs and losing energy no matter how skillfully you see them off, the limitations imposed by the genre soon become apparent. The game consists of a dull pattern of gang fights, followed by a little jog to the next group. Strangely, while playing it does prove entertaining, but there's something automonous about it – a case of 'brain off, reflexes into gear.' Whether Virgin's deal with Capcom extends to *Dynasty Wars II* has yet to be confirmed, but this is definitely one of the weakest titles to emerge from them.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	73
ANIMATION	64
SOUND FX	68
MUSIC	69
LASTABILITY	64
PLAYABILITY	71

## OVERALL

68



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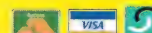
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# Rise 2 Resurrection

## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM  
CONTINUES: 3  
SKILL LEVELS: 24

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BY ACCLAIM  
PLAYERS 1-2



et's begin with a simple mathematical sum. Take seven robots, add a dash of *Street Fighter* and subtract any trace of gameplay. What do you end up with? *Rise of the Robots*. Here's another. Take the same seven robots, 'beef' them up, add another 11 combat droids and a load of new special moves, multiply the *Street Fighter*-style gameplay by ten and divide excitement by two. The result is the less than endowed *Rise 2 Resurrection*.

Yes, it's a sequel and undoubtedly it's better than the appalling original. But no, it's not as good as *Tekken*. Or *Street Fighter Alpha*. Or even *Mortal Kombat 3*. After much hype, *Rise 2 Resurrection* is a disappointing, all-too average beat 'em up that looks dated, is unimaginative and offers nothing new or exciting. Most of the best bits have been nicked from other games, but have been poorly implemented and so do little to make *Rise 2 Resurrection* anything more than a mediocre fighting game.

It looks good though. The robots are cool, the backgrounds are detailed and animation is smooth, but all this cosmetic gloss is basically a wafer-thin facade to cover over the lacking gameplay. Sure, the scraping metallic crunch as two robots clash in battle is satisfying, but wouldn't you rather indulge in a little bone-breaking a la *Tekken*? Hmm, I thought as much.



## SUIKWAN

Suikwan is a master of martial arts, fighting for the honour of its clan lead by The Supervisor. Its huge sword and blade-tipped cape are deadly in its hands.



### Special Move SWORD LUNGE



### Super Special Move SPINNING DRESS ATTACK



## STEPPENWOLF

Steppenwolf is the most heavily armed robot of those featured in *Rise 2 Resurrection*, with missile launchers strapped to its back and arm-mounted machine guns.



### Special Move CANNON



### Super Special Move SUPER AIR STRIKE



## EXTRA, EXTRA...

As well as the 18 fighters that appear on the character selection screen, there are also a number of hidden and boss warriors to find. Some are accessed by completing the game, battling past the initial robots and eventually defeating the Supervisor, while the others can only be found by defeating the final guardian without losing a bout.

SECRET BATTLE MODE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE HIDDEN CHARACTERS IN RISE 2 RESURRECTION.

## GRILLER

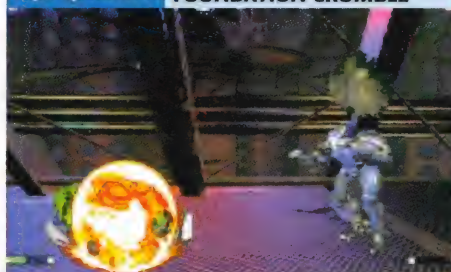
Like Prime-8, Griller relies on sheer brute strength to tear its opponent limb from limb. The pneumatic hammer can also be used to pummel its enemy.



### Special Move PUMMEL



### Super Special Move FOUNDATION CRUMBLE



## INSANE

Erk - Insane's a weird 'un! More a genetic mutant than a robot, this alien-like beast can throw ice balls and also thumps opponents with a pair of baseball bats.



### Special Move ICEBALL



### Super Special Move SUPER PAGGA





THERE ARE TEN EXTRA CHARACTERS IN *Part 2: Resurrection*, SOME OF WHICH ARE BOSS-ES FROM THE ONE-PLAYER GAME, AND OTHERS THAT CAN BE ACCESSSED BY THE PLAYER.



## LOCKJAW

Racks of powerful shoulder-mounted rockets allow Lockjaw to attack from afar, although its hydraulic pinchers make lethal melee weapons.



Special Move **MID-AIR MISSILES**

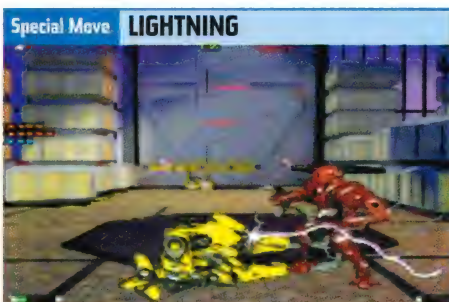


Super Special Move **MULTIPLE MISSILE**



## LOADER

Brought over from *Rise of the Robots*, the Loader has been suitably beefed up, now boasting thicker armour and some wicked lightning strikes.



Special Move **LIGHTNING**



Super Special Move **LIGHTNING SPIKES**



## CRUSHER

Crusher may be slow and bulky demolition droid, but it makes up for its lack of agility and speed with powerful special moves and counter-attacks.



Special Move **DIVE**



Super Special Move **TRIPLE ACID SPIT**

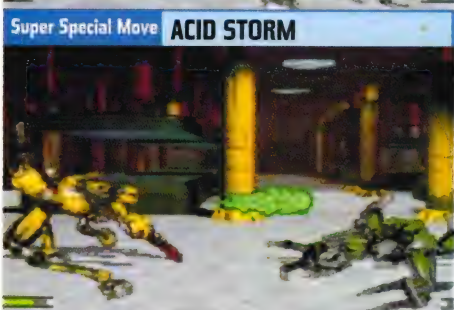


## VANDAL

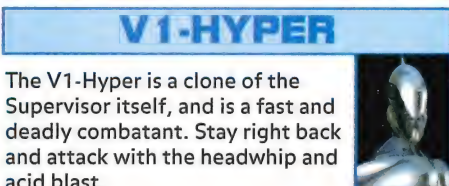
Vandal's couple of chainsaws and single buzzsaw make it a lethal hand-to-hand combat opponent, so stay well away if you're fighting this beastie.



Special Move **BUZZSAW**

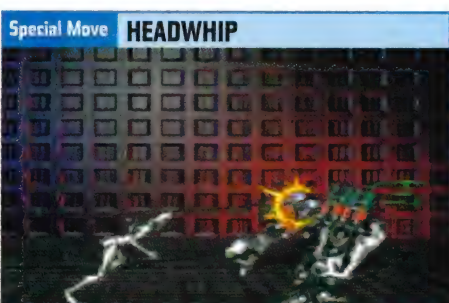
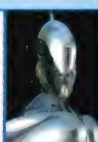


Super Special Move **ACID STORM**

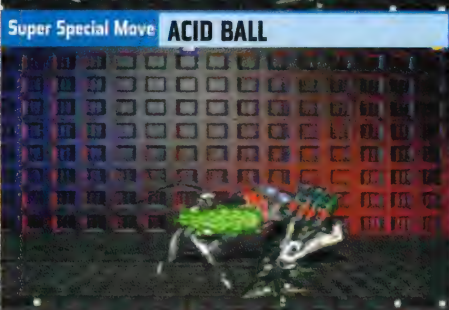


## V1-HYPER

The V1-Hyper is a clone of the Supervisor itself, and is a fast and deadly combatant. Stay right back and attack with the headwhip and acid blast.



Special Move **HEADWHIP**



Super Special Move **ACID BALL**



## CHROMAX

The Anarchy Virus mutated Chromax's program chip, turning it into a ravaging killing machine capable of tearing through metal with its steel claws.



Special Move **HEAD THROW**



Super Special Move **JUMP JET KICK**

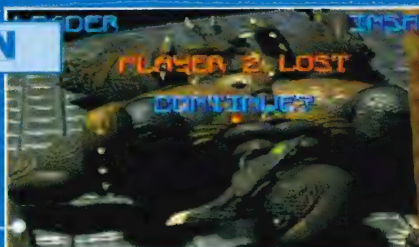


## RENDERED HEAVEN

*Rise 2 Resurrection* features a selection of rendered cutscenes including death sequences for each of the robots. Like the in-game graphics they're pretty cool, but are a bit fuzzy and lack definition.

**WHEN EACH OF THE ROBOTS DIES, A SEPARATE DEATH SCENE IS PLAYED.**

**VARIOUS RENDERED CUT-SCENES PLAY DURING THE GAME'S INTRODUCTION SEQUENCES.**



### CYBORG

Returning from the original *Rise of the Robots*, Cotton is the cyborg who must once again defeat the all-powerful Supervisor. He's been beefed up for *Rise 2*.



### PRIME-8

The ape-like Prime-8 is much faster and agile than its bulkier predecessor from the first game, and has also learned a variety of new attacks.



### DETAIN

Military Police robot Detain will readily use brute force to subdue his foe, calling on his extensive array of electric shock attacks to stun the enemy.



#### Special Move MID-AIR FIREBALL



#### Super Special Move SUPER PAGGA



#### Special Move GROUND SMASH



#### Super Special Move SUPER BARREL ROLL



#### Special Move HEADBUTT



#### Super Special Move LASER



### DEADLIFT

Deadlift is a powerful fighter, boasting a wide array of close-combat and ranged attacks with which to tear apart its opponent. He looks hard, too.



### WAR

War is equipped with deadly razor-sharp blades with which to hack at its opponent, and also carries an infinite supplies of powerful hand grenades.



### ROOK

Huge jets on Rook's back allow it to charge quickly, knocking down the enemy in a blur of speed. Rook also boasts some impressive punch and kick combos.



#### Special Move FLAMING SWORD



#### Super Special Move SUPER PAGGA



#### Special Move SNAP KICK



#### Super Special Move FLAMETHROWER



#### Special Move JET KICK



#### Super Special Move NUKE





## COMMENT

ALEX

Although  
*Rise 2  
Resurrection*

is a great improvement over the original *Rise of the Robots*, it's flaws are all too apparent when compared with the mighty *Street Fighter Alpha*. Graphically the game is pretty cool, the rendered robots and background having a suitably science fiction quality. Smooth animation ensures they move fairly realistically too, so the only failing of *Rise 2 Resurrection*'s presentation is its lack of definition – in all honesty the game looks a bit 'fuzzy'. In terms of gameplay *Rise 2 Resurrection* is again okay, but isn't as fluid or structured as *Street Fighter Alpha*. The moves are easy enough to execute but stringing combos together is much more difficult, and too many fights can be won just by charging in close and furiously attacking. There are loads of robotic fighters to master though, with a huge selection of visually impressive special moves and executions to learn. Even so, no amount of glossy presentation and flashy attacks can make *Rise 2 Resurrection* anything more than the mediocre beat 'em up it so clearly is.

## COMMENT

MATT

Oh lord. I was quite prepared to forget all about *Rise of the Robots* and approach this with an open mind, but despite all the gorgeous renders, *Rise 2 Resurrection* is pretty crap. Though each and every character has about a hundred special moves to toy with, I defy anyone to play against the computer for more than five minutes before resorting to random button pressing tactics. The graphics themselves are pretty messy, and though the animation appears to be well catered for as far as the number of frames go, compared to the likes of *Mortal Kombat 3*, the movement throughout the game just doesn't work. Trying to chain moves together or develop any sort of style seems near impossible, and the game can hardly be described as rewarding to play. If I were marking this, I'd probably kill it.

## WELL EXECUTED

Each robot boasts an impressive array of punches and kicks, as well as a load of special moves. Most of the droids have projectile attacks like fireballs and all have execution moves, similar to the fatalities in *Mortal Kombat*. Execute an opponent and you'll steal one of their special moves, so manage to pull off one of these thumb-twisting attacks is worth more than just a pretty death sequence.



## NECROBORG

The Necroborg was created as a direct equal to the Cyborg. Constructed from synthi-brain encased in armour, watch out for the Necroborg's lightning strikes.



## Special Move LIGHTNING UPPERCUT



## Super Special Move LIGHTNING BLAST



## SALVO

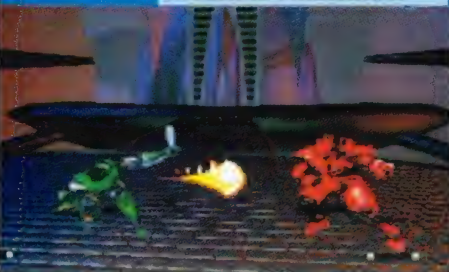
Ranking in the hierarchy of the Supervisor's robot army, Salvo prefers to fight in close-combat, saving its flamethrower for difficult opponents.



## Special Move KNIFE THROW



## Super Special Move MULTIPLE FIRETHROW



## RATING

GRAPHICS

82

ANIMATION

74

SOUND FX

79

MUSIC

81

LASTABILITY

79

PLAYABILITY

75

## OVERALL

78



# Williams

## Arcade Classics

### GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIOUS  
CONTINUES: VARIOUS  
SKILL LEVELS: VARIOUS

RELEASE MAY

PRICE £TBA

BY GT INTERACTIVE

PLAYERS VARIOUS



ime to break the mould, me-thinks. We've had a couple of these 'oldie compila-

tions' now, so it's seems a bit pointless giving you the usual length of intro when you already know the deal. You get six games on one disc, all of which have appeared in arcades as coin-ops of yesteryear, and all waving the banner 'Classic'. Some are, but some, however, are not. In this case, things are looking distinctly more positive as it's the first such title to feature Williams games, and with an impressive roster including the likes of *Defender*, *Joust*, *Sinistar*, and *Robotron*, well... let's just say that you'd have to be rather mad not to find something here you like.

### ROBOTRON

The forerunner to more modern-day classics as *Smash TV* and *Total Carnage*, *Robotron* is the quintessence of the phrase 'up against the odds'. They really don't come much simpler than this. Each level is nothing more than a box filled with evil robots that want to kill you. To start off with they'll simply walk into you to deliver their fatal touch, but as the levels progress the baddies become more diverse, with some trying to shoot you, some being invulnerable to your shots (and therefore requiring some delicate avoiding) and others mutating the innocent humans into mega-git zombies. What? Didn't I mention all the humans? Sorry.

Yes, as well as worrying about your own safety during each level, you must also attempt to rescue a number of innocent human families that have been caught up in all the nastiness. This ain't, however, as easy as it sounds.

One of the ground-breaking features of the original coin-op was a double joystick system. Basically, one joystick controlled movement, while the other controlled the direction of your shots. This was essential to the game as you often had to run away from a horde while shooting at them, and the good news is that the system has been reproduced brilliantly using the Dpad for movement and the four fire buttons to control the shot direction.

*Robotron* isn't the most incredible-looking game you'll ever see, but for sheer ferocity of play and adrenaline-fuelled fun, even newcomers to the game will have a tremendous time.

5/5



### JOUST

*Joust* is a damn simple idea that takes the traditional mediaeval understanding of the sport and mingles it with the more surreal angle of performing the art on the backs of ostrich. That can fly. Yes.

You start off on one or a number of platforms in a wrap-around play area. Other jousters appear and attempt to knock you off your bird by running into you with their lance higher than yours. The only controls you have are to move left and right, as well as being able to flap your wings for height. The harder and more rapid your flapping, the higher and faster you'll rise. Get knocked off and you'll lose a life, beat an opponent and their mount will fly off leaving an egg to fall to the ground. You now have a set amount of time to collect this egg before it hatches into a more evil rider, at which point a new bird will fly down to collect him.



Though that's the basic idea behind the game, there are other elements to deal with such as pits of lava to fall into, indestructible vultures that attack if you take too long, and special race-against-time egg stages.

The other feature that makes *Joust* so special is that two players can flap about the



screen at the same time. You can either be mates and go for the cooperation bonuses, or take advantage of the 'Gladiator' rounds and grab a huge points bonus for knocking your chum off his feathered friend. A brilliant game as either a one or two-player game, and an excellent inclusion on the disk.

5/5



## DEFENDER

Well, what is there to say about *Defender* that has not been said a million times before. If ever there was a classic coin-op gagging to be seen on our screens again, it's this. Strangely, without the cramp-inducing, five-buttoned cabinet to crawl over (anyone remember trying to cover thrust, fire, reverse, smart bombs, hyperspace *and* the joystick at the same time without fracturing your wrists?) the nostalgia rush isn't quite the same. However, the moment you hear those sound effects and see those title graphics hover into view, you can't help but reach for a ten pence piece (and I'm referring to the proper old sized coins).

The idea behind *Defender* is a simple one. You have to pilot a ship across a wrap-around playing area, protecting a human colony from alien attackers. Some aliens are just there to sod you about, while the green *Space Invaders*-like Landers are there to abduct the innocent folk below.

Once captured, the human in question will send out a distress tone, at which point it's down to you to find them and shoot the Lander before it has the chance to rise to the top of the screen. Succeed and the human will drop to the ground where, unless you can catch it first, it'll die horribly. However, catch the little fella and you'll receive bonuses ahoy and get to take them home safely.



Clear the entire level of aliens and you'll be rewarded for your efficiency before warping off to the next level. And that, in essence, is what *Defender* is all about.

The PlayStation joypad manages the controls very well, and if anything makes the game easier to play as the reverse is instant via the Dpad. There are smart bombs to crackle away at the aliens, and the hyperspace is still as dodgy as ever; sometimes saving your bacon, sometimes frying it in batter. *Defender* proves itself the classic it truly is by remaining as playable and addictive in 1996 as it was in 1980. Simply brilliant.

5/5



**EVERYTHING IS HERE, EVEN DOWN TO THE ATTRACTOR MODES AND INSTRUCTION SCREENS.**



**DOES THIS BRING THE MEMORIES FLOODING BACK OR WHAT? AH, YOU CAN ALMOST SMELL THE CHIPS.**

## DEFENDER II

Though a pretty good game in its own right, as far as being a sequel to *Defender* goes, *Defender II* doesn't really evolve enough to warrant mass excitement. The game play remains pretty much the same, with tons of aliens scrolling around at breakneck speed and humans putting themselves in perilous positions, but other than a few new aliens and a slightly tweaked graphic style, things are much the same — if not a bit too much the same. The only real addition worth note are the warp gates that appear at various points across the game area, allowing the player to jump from one location to another without the risks generally associated with hyperspace.

There seems to be a few more alien ships that are able to move faster than your ship, but as mentioned before, this is really more of a *Defender* mk.II than a brand new game.

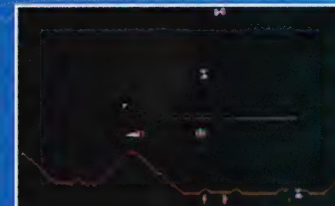
If memory serves, this didn't really catch on particularly well in the arcades, but when you're trying to follow an act like the original *Defender*, well, how do you win? *Defender II* therefore remains a welcome addition to the Classics disc, but not an essential one.

3/5



**ALMOST AS FAMOUS AS THE GAMES THEMSELVES IS THE 'TOOTHPASTE' LASER EMPLOYED BY DEFENDER AND DEFENDER II.**

**AND HERE IT IS, THE FAMOUS WARP GATE FIRST SEEN IN DEFENDER II. USE THIS AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BLOWING UP.**



## BUBBLES

*Bubbles* is a bit of a curiosity as it's the only game on this pack that I don't remember from the arcades. It's also a weird little offering as it's theme is a very different one from the more futuristic, action-packed games that made up the majority of Williams' coin-op library at the time. The game itself is simple enough, with you taking on the heroic role of a drop of water in a sink (see, I told you). Your basic aim is to dribble around the sink area, absorbing a certain number of smaller droplets and objects until you've grown large enough to plop yourself down the plug hole and onto the next level.

As the levels progress, more nasty items start appearing from the central plug hole, including spiders and tons of sharp objects all set to (quite literally) burst your bubble. The sink also becomes more cluttered with discarded razor blades and nail brushes which will all happily rob you of a life should you make contact.

And that's about as clever as it gets. It's by no



means as duff as some of the lesser titles we've seen on, say, the Namco compilations, but it's easily the weakest of the Williams titles. Fortunately, it still remains a playable little distraction and something that you're likely to play every now and then for fun.

2/5



**A GREEN LIGHT IN THE PLUG HOLE MEANS YOU'RE READY TO LEAVE.**



REVIEW



## SINISTAR

There was a time when *Sinistar* was the only game I'd play in the arcades. To go one step further into sad-dom, I even tried to make my own version on the Spectrum. Needless to say, it was crap and I gave up after a couple of weeks.

If there's one thing that sells *Sinistar* (apart from the fact that it's a damn fine idea, well implemented) it's the atmosphere and down right scariness of the thing. The Sinistar of the title is a massive evil entity out to get you, and the only way to destroy this abomination is to mine asteroids that inhabit your area of space, blasting away with your laser until small crystals flow out — because crystals = Sinibombs. Unfortunately, small alien workers are also out to collect these crystals as they're the building blocks for the Sinistar himself. As you progress in your collecting activities, so to do the aliens, gradually building the Sinistar up from a framework jigsaw to a complete monstrosity.

Once complete, the Sinistar begins its scary harassing, chasing you around the game area. With a voice designed to make small coin-op playing kids poo their pants, Sinistar screams after you, announcing his desire to eat you and generally making you sweat. Once on the same screen as the Sinistar, it's down to you to drop your precious supply of Sinibombs into his mouth before he chomps on you, but for every piece of the Sinistar you destroy, there'll be a worker waiting to repair the damage. The game therefore becomes a race against time, as you mine to get enough bombs to blow the star, while the workers squabble to rebuild the bugger.

As if things weren't nasty enough, there are also combat aliens flitting around, each armed with a frighteningly accurate turret, forcing you to split your time between mining the asteroids, avoiding the aggressive 'tank' baddies, and shooting the ant-like workers.

Though not as well known as the likes of *Defender*, *Sinistar* is an awesome (if not awesomely hard) arcade classic, and as such, will be taking up a fair amount of your time. A true classic.

5/5

## COMMENT

STEVE

No sooner had we heard this compilation was on its way, then it arrives for review. After criticising Namco's pair of *Museums* for their uneven content, the same applies to *Williams Arcade Classics* — but, thankfully, there is only one weak title, two average ones, and the rest are nothing short of superb. To get the weakest of the sextet out of the way, just totally ignore *Bubbles*. It's arcade toss which quite rightfully has lain forgotten in the annals of arcadedom. Similarly, *Defender II* is too close to the original, and *Robotron* has a brilliant control system but lacks lasting appeal. But when you think of Williams and their classic arcade titles, you think of *Joust*, *Sinistar* and *Defender* — and all three are as good today as they were all those years ago. Forget the likes of *PACMAN* and *Galplus*, these are true arcade classics. *Defender* is as addictive as ever, with all the fast-paced action repeated perfectly, while *Sinistar* and its claustrophobic play area and use of speech remains as playable as ever — particularly since the time-limit adds an ominous feeling to the proceedings. For me, though, *Joust* is what makes this compilation. Control over the Ostrich is perfect, and genuine skill and precision needed to avoid the many traps. In all, five out of six ain't bad, and this represents the best 'old timer' yet.



**RUN AWAY!!** THINGS GET PRETTY HAIRY ONCE SINISTAR DECIDES HE WANTS A PIECE OF YOUR BUTT FOR THE MANTLEPIECE. HAVE YOUR SINIBOMBS AT THE READY OR BE PREPARED TO DIE. HORRIBLY.

## HISTORY TELLS

To make the package as comprehensive as possible, GT Interactive has included a number of FMV sequences featuring programmers recounting key events from the creation of these classics. There are also a number of info files to read through and promotional posters and adverts for the seriously sad. Er... I mean, interested.

ALL OF THE ORIGINAL ARTWORK AND SHOTS OF THE ARCADE CASES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE NOSTALGIC, ALONG WITH FMV-ED PROGRAMMERS WITH TALES OF OLD.



## COMMENT

MATT

Having been prepared for this retro-thing with Namco's ongoing *Museum* series, the Williams collection is welcome indeed as it features as many true classics on one disc as the two Namco discs have put together. Another reason that I rate this disc above Namco's two is that you don't need fond, overly-nostalgic memories of these games to enjoy them. I enjoyed *Mappy* for my own reasons, but to others it just appeared to be an average old platform game. *Defender*, however, is brilliant as either an old friend or to a new gamer who's never even seen it before. The same can be said for *Joust*, *Robotron* and *Sinistar*. While *Bubbles* and *Defender II* might be considered the duffers in the compilation, they're not as crap as the weaker titles on the Namco discs have been, and are still fun enough in their own right. Whereas I usually end saying that ultimate value will be down to how rose-coloured your specs are, with these titles I feel confident that even Williams virgin will enjoy themselves. And for old crusties who get goose bumps upon hearing the *Defender* sound effects? Well roll up your sleeves, here comes a tidal wave.

## RATING

In what has become a tradition with these retro-compilations, we won't be awarding points for individual areas such as sound, music and graphics simply because the quality differs so much between, for example, *Bubbles* and *Sinistar*. Therefore, the Overall mark indicates how worthy we feel this product is of your hard-earned cash, while the individual games are to be judged by their marks out of five. Thank you for your attention.

## OVERALL

89



their only crime was curiosity

# Hackers 12

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# NBA Live 96



asketball. Basketball. Basketball. What is it about the PlayStation and basketball? Fair enough, Channel Four have just embarked upon a season of the game's coverage, but why are there so many bloody games?

Well bugger it, I say. As long as they're decent, why not. But what about poor old Johnny Consumer? How is he supposed to make a choice between them all? Take Electronic Arts' offering for instance; it has beautifully authentic squeaky floorboards, the best music I've heard in a game for quite some while, and all 29 NBA teams (including the Vancouver and Toronto expansion teams, no less). You can play in either single exhibition games, major team playoffs, or play through a season — but can't you do that in all the others (ie *NBA Jam: Tournament Edition*, *NBA: In The Zone*, and *Total NBA*)? Well no, not quite...

Where *NBA Live 96* differs from the others is that, while not boasting the same trademark Next Gen graphics that most games have tried to impress with, *NBA Live 96* does include extra features such as being able to trade players between teams, as well as having to worry about more realistic match problems such as player's fatigue and injuries, in-game substitutions, travelling and backcourt violations. You have complete control over what rules are enforced and to what degree, and even decide whether the outcome of a player's shots is down to their real-life skills, or down to your personal playing skills.

The action replays are particularly nice as, not only do you have complete (and very user-friendly) control over the action, but you can watch the basket from any of the camera views. If you generally play the game with a simple view, this allows you to watch again using a more dramatic camera.

## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE  
CONTINUES: MEMORY CARD  
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE MAY

PRICE £44.99

BY EA

PLAYERS 1-2

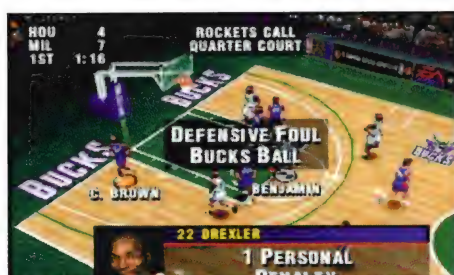






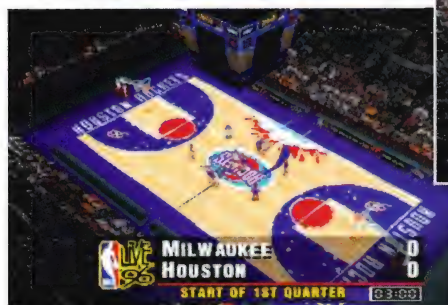
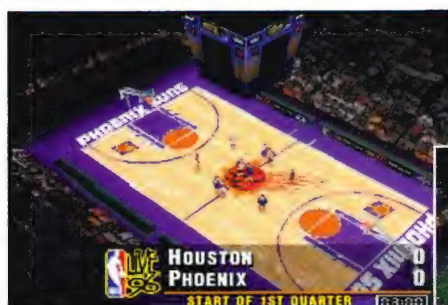
## BERT 'EM UP

As well as having a button for stealing, *NBA Live 96* features a button called 'Hand-check'. The truth, however, is that this is nothing less than an enormous shove in the style of EA's famous FIFA soccer title. Get away with it and the receiving player will drop the ball and slide across the floor, get nicked and you'll give away a free shot. This works in an identical way to that seen in SCE's *Total NBA*, with two 'reaction test bars' affecting the accuracy or the shot.



NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE COMPUTER VERY RARELY MISSES A FREE SHOT. MY ADVICE — DON'T GIVE THEM AWAY. PLONKER.

## COURT IN THE ACT. AGAIN.



With realism ever-present in producers' minds, each team has had their court beautifully recreated for the PlayStation. Watch out for when the camera swoops in before each quarter — it's a stomach churner!



ONCE AGAIN ELECTRONIC ARTS HAVE EMPLOYED THEIR VIRTUA STADIUM TECHNIQUE FOR MAXIMUM REALISM AND ATMOSPHERE.

## STATISTICS AHOY!

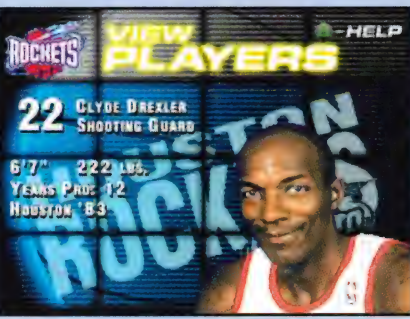
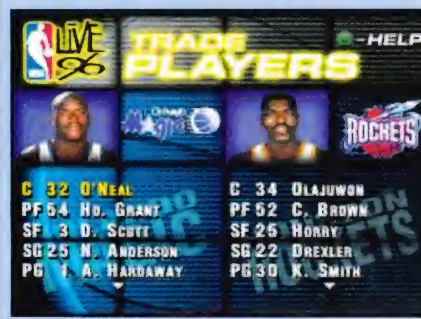
TEAM STATS		
16	POINTS	15
40%	FIELD GOAL %	36%
6/15	FIELD GOALS	7/19
0%	3 POINT %	16%
0/1	3 POINTS	1/6
66%	FREE THROW %	0/0
4/6	FREE THROWS	0/0
2	OFFENSIVE REBOUNDS	2

Egg and bacon, Torville and Dean, Basketball games and statistics. Yes, they all go together hand in hand, and *NBA Live 96* has tons of the latter to amuse yourself with.

TOP PERFORMERS		
55	DIKEMBE C. MUTOMBO	POINTS
11		REBOUNDS
6		BLOCKS
0		ASSISTS
0		STEALS
50	DAVID C. ROBINSON	POINTS
11		REBOUNDS
4		BLOCKS
0		ASSISTS
0		STEALS

Being the manager you can trade players between your team and any other team in the NBA rosters. Apart from a few miss-

ing players (due to contractual reasons, apparently) every player you can think of is in there somewhere.



While in simulation mode, if you don't want to play every game yourself, just click on the 'Simulate' icon and the computer will give you the result based upon the attributes of the two teams.

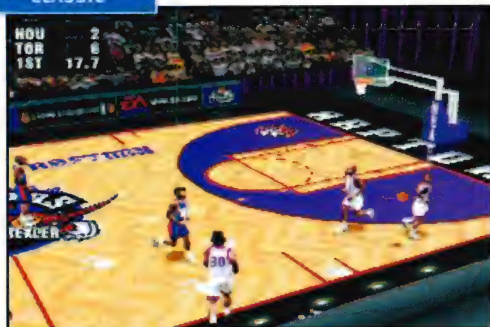




## LOOKING DOWN

As you've come to expect in pretty much every PlayStation game, *NBA Live 96* features a number of camera views to watch the action from (in fact I think this game holds the record for the most views, with 15 on offer!) They come in five distinct classes, with fine tuning available via the different versions.

### CLASSIC



There are three versions of the 'Classic' camera available, offering a sort of low-isometric view that travels along the side of the court with the play. The 'Classic III' is a particularly nice version, zooming in for close basket action, and keeping up with long ball play quite nicely.

### PRESS

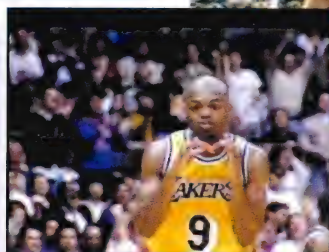
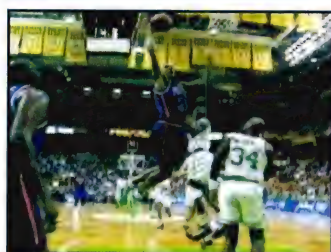


With four variations on offer, the 'Press' camera offers a panning view from a central position. This can lead to a bit of a whizz, as the ball travels from one end to the other, but the various versions offer some nice zooming in for the close basket action. Again.

### IDEALINE



Rather unsurprisingly, the two different 'Idealine' views offer a simple side-on view of the game, with the camera travelling along the court with the ball. This is the worst view for following the ball, as you'll often pass up court only to be left blind for a couple of seconds while the camera catches up.



### END



There are four different versions of the 'End' camera view to choose from, each giving a straight view from the end of the court (from above the basket itself). The different versions offer different levels of zoom and alterations to positioning so avoiding the basket obscuring vision. Not bad, but not always clear at distance.

### SKY



The two 'Sky' options are really hybrids of the 'End' and 'Press' camera views, with version one being a ludicrously high view from above the end basket, and the second being a sort of ceiling-view (that suffers from losing sight of the ball quite often). However, despite this problem, the second option is actually a very good view to use as the higher angle makes the crowded plays easier to follow.

## COMMENT

### STEVE

*NBA Live 96* uses the same 'Virtua Stadium' system as FIFA and, consequently, suffers from the same problems. The sprites lack definition, and the action has a slower pace than other PlayStation offerings. I did, however, feel more in control of my teams than FIFA's players, but ultimately came away from *NBA Live 96* feeling indifferent. It lacks the graphical finesse, speed and realism of its rivals, and consequently is an also-ran in the NBA stakes. Not crap, but not brilliant.



THE INTRO FOR *NBA LIVE* FEATURES TONS OF YOUR FAVOURITE NBA PLAYERS BEING VERY TALL AND COOL.

## COMMENT

### MATT

Initially, I wasn't all that taken with *NBA Live 96*. However, having now given it a couple of day's play I've warmed to it somewhat, but still can't help thinking it's a bit superfluous to our needs right now. We've already got Acclaim's *NBA Jam* for people who just want a bit of a muck about, while Konami and Sony's more simulation-like offerings cater for the serious player. *NBA Live 96* sits between them, using more simplistic arcade graphics, but retaining all of the detail of the previous NBA titles. It's as though this would suit someone who wants a serious game without having it *really* serious. It doesn't try to ram its clever graphics down your throat, but flows along very nicely. Also, while looking to be more simple than *Total NBA* and *In The Zone*, the set plays, fatigue and injuries actually make it the more detailed in some areas. I'd hate to be out choosing a basketball game right now, but all said and done, *NBA Live 96* shouldn't be ignored. Sadly, I feel people will still be drawn towards the more graphically stunning titles.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	81
ANIMATION	81
SOUND FX	84
MUSIC	83
LASTABILITY	90
PLAYABILITY	80
OVERALL	81





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# GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD  
CONTINUES: INFINITE  
SKILL LEVELS: VARIOUS

RELEASE OUT NOW

PRICE IMPORT

BY KONAMI

PLAYERS 1-2



his retro thing has gone beyond a joke now. Adidas three stripes and Fred Perry polo shirts are cool but

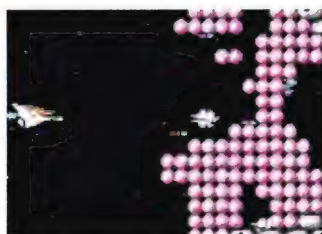
the latest fad of releasing 'classic' arcade games from the Eighties oversteps the mark. Good as they were, games like *PAC-MAN* and *Joust* don't push the PlayStation to its limit and are hardly a testament to 32bit technology. But, like Michael Bolton records, they're still popular although no-one quite knows why. Namco has already released two *Museum* collections including *Pole Position* and *Galaga*, while *Williams' Arcade Classics* offers perfect conversions of *Defender* and as well as loads of other coin-op legends.

*Gradius* is a bit more up to date, released in 1985 and as such boasting (slightly) better presentation, a greater variety of enemies and end-of-level guardians. *Gradius* was also one of the first shoot 'em ups to introduce power-ups, allowing players to bolt extra weapons onto the standard ship. *Gradius II* took power-ups a stage further when it was originally released in 1988, and offered a selection of four ship set-ups and two shield configurations. Graphically the sequel was only slightly better, with varied enemies and more detailed scenery. However, while the *Gradius* games look dated compared to the visual feast of cutting-edge software like *WipeOut*, surely the simple-but-addictive shoot 'em up gameplay has stood the test of time? Well, no. Oops.

# Gradius Deluxe Pack

## GRADIUS

Although more sophisticated than *Defender*, *Gradius* is still a painfully basic side-scrolling shoot 'em up. Flying a tiny Vic Viper fighter, *Gradius* boasts a meagre seven levels, all of which are distressingly similar. Rather than being split into separate stages the enemies attack in a continuous stream, the onslaught occasionally broken up by a guardian. The Viper is powered up by grabbing the bonus icons, one of which increases the speed of the ship. Collect two the Viper is equipped with missiles, while three awards a double shot. Pick up four icons and receive a



laser, five to activate a drone pod which imitates the ship's every move. Lastly there's the shield, which is obtained by grabbing six bonuses. Unfortunately the Viper is stripped of all the extras once it's been hit, leaving the player with a pathetic little peashooter with which to fend off the alien attack. Damn.



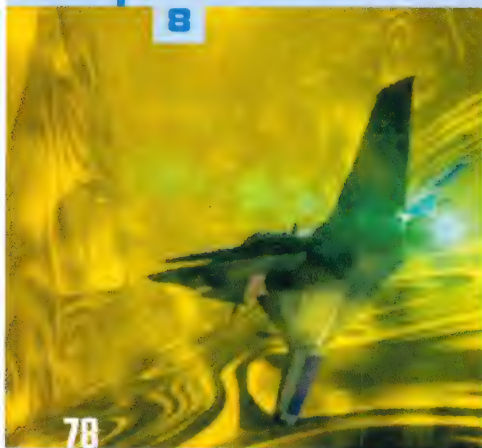
## GRADIUS II

There is actually very little difference between the first *Gradius* and this, its sequel. The enemies are graphically better but attack in pretty much the same patterns and other visual improvements are barely noticeable. The guardians are more varied though and the variation between stages is much more apparent. The biggest addition are the extra bonuses, which are powered up in exactly the same way as the original *Gradius*. New weapons include the ripple laser, proton torpedo, tail gun and spread, bomb, and in addition to the shield there's also forcefield that encapsulates the ship. It can only sustain a few hits before shortcircuiting though, making the Viper vulnerable once again. Bigger.



A BURNING PHOENIX ATTACKS AT THE END OF THE FIRST STAGE IN GRADIUS II.

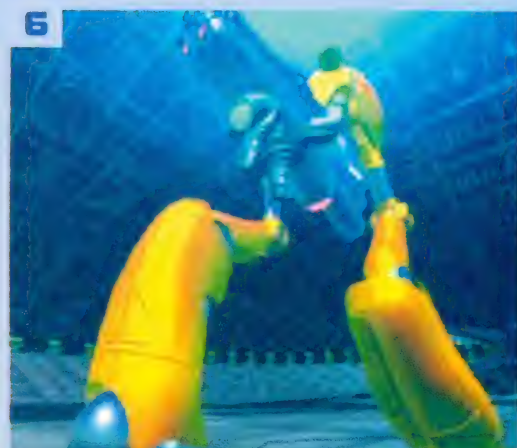
8



7



6

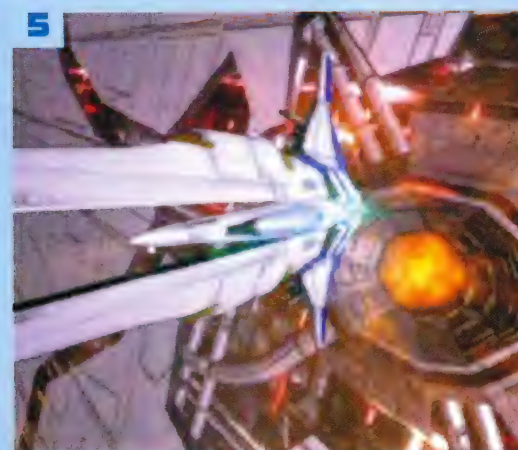




## COMMENT

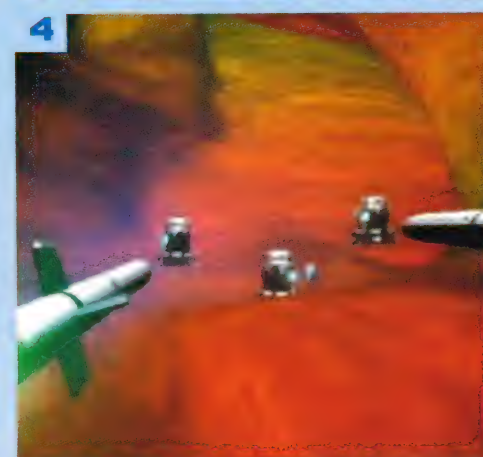
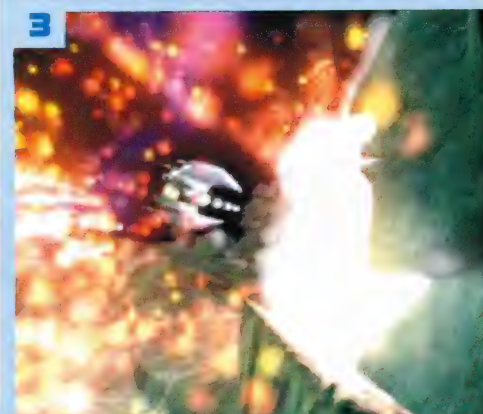
STEVE

I'm in shock. As a teenager, I used to love playing *Gradius* and its sequel in my local, and whizzed through the stages with ease. Now, ten years later, I'm obviously well past it as I'm not half as adept as I used to be! Although the initial wave of nostalgia kicked in and made me want to hone my skills on both games, I felt that the difficulty level was a little steep and made for more frustrating games. There's no denying the inventive backdrops and levels (which still look good today), but the over-precise sprite detection eventually had me pulling my hair out rather than trying to edge further in the game. A sad case of things not always being as you remember them.



## NICE GRAPHICS...

A cool rendered introduction sequence has been bolted onto the front of *Gradius Deluxe* to give the bundle a more 32bit feel. As the Vic Viper streaks through alien-infested canyons and skims across the surfaces of a burning moon while flaming dragons arc through space, it's all too easy to forget that you're playing a game that's over a decade old. That is until *Gradius* itself actually starts up, then it's back to the blocky, basic graphics of the mid-Eighties. Boo.



## COMMENT

STEVE

Enough of these classic games, please. The PlayStation is a sophisticated console that's capable of running some impressive games, so the likes of *Gradius* really are a waste of the machine's power. Admittedly this pack does have some nostalgic value, but neither of the games are true classics like *Defender*, even though they set new parameters with the introduction of power-ups. But, with the standard of software so high, most of these ancient games, *Gradius* included, have very little to offer. As a basic shoot 'em up both *Gradius* and *Gradius II* are okay, offering a few hours of simple blasting, but that's where the fun ends. After playing through the first couple of levels on both games there's very little to hold your attention - no cool cutscenes, no impressive enemies, nothing. The opening sequence is neat, but spending £40 on a smart rendered intro that lasts less than a couple of minutes is ridiculous. It's addictive gameplay that counts, and while *Gradius* is good for a quick blast, ultimately it's tedious and all-too dated.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	62
ANIMATION	50
SOUND FX	63
MUSIC	59
LASTABILITY	69
PLAYABILITY	76

## OVERALL







# GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY  
CONTINUES: N/A  
SKILL LEVELS: 1

RELEASE OUT NOW

PRICE £44.95

BY EA

PLAYERS 1 - 4



o these song words mean anything to you? 'Ever since I was a young boy, I played the silver ball...'

Those of you who live or work around central London cannot fail to have noticed that interest in pinball games is likely to be on the increase. Why? Probably due to the success of the musical *Tommy*, about a visually and aurally impaired teenager who becomes a 'Pinball Wizard'. Yup, based on one of those Seventies cultural inventions, the rock opera, and written and performed by The Who, the *Tommy* album gripped the rock music world twenty-five odd years ago for, oh, at least a week. They even made a film of it, with Elton John as the stack-heeled former Pinball Wizard handing his crown over to Tommy and Tina Turner vamping it up as the Acid Queen. Nowadays, The Who resemble those two old guys in the box from the Muppet Show, and spend their time breeding trout, drinking beer and periodically restarting their faded careers as solo performers. And all acting a bit sad, really.

So, what does the PlayStation need another pinball game for? Good question really. What does EA's *Extreme Pinball* have to offer? Well, just four tables, a choice of ball allotment and some glaring one-colour graphics that tell you what your score is, what to try and aim for next and how to get the jackpot. It's all very tame and bears little resemblance to, say Ocean's excellent *True Pinball*, lacking many of that game's special features and so induces more than just a few yawns.

# Extreme Pinball



## BACK TO BASICS

Without the benefit of good 3D table-top views, *Extreme Pinball* relies too much on the traditional approach, and comes off looking like a 16bit game rather than stretching the Next Gen console as it should. The options are frighteningly limited. Four players can play any one match, with up to seven balls – very useful for beginners – all of which go easily down the drain (almost as if the flippers were a bit too wide apart). Frankly, it all seems rather unimaginative and reeks of wasted opportunities.



AS EACH TABLE LOADS, YOU CAN INSPECT THESE RATHER CUTE PICTURES. HOPEFULLY YOU'LL GROW TO LIKE THEM BECAUSE EACH EXTREME PINBALL TABLE TAKES FAR TOO LONG TO LOAD UP AND YOU SEE THEM RATHER A LOT.

## COMMENT

STEVE

After the rather smart *True Pinball*

from Ocean, the stakes were well and truly raised for any future pinball titles. Sadly, EA obviously failed to see what made *True Pinball* such a good game, and opted for a sub-standard effort which would look dated on the Amiga. Everything about *Extreme Pinball* is second-rate. The scrolling jerks around to add confusion to the proceedings, the ball movement is sluggish and far from realistic, and the tables bland and uninteresting. Similarly, the LED sequences which take up a third of the screen (although can be switched off), prove a real distraction and make the game even harder on the eye. I really cannot sum up how much I dislike this game. It is amateurish, tedious, and offers stuff-all for your forty-five quid. With *Fade To Black* looking very impressive indeed, we're willing to forgive EA for this temporary slip in quality – but games like this are unacceptable for such a powerful machine.

## MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS

Begin  
Select Table  
Players  
Balls  
Options  
High Scores  
Credits



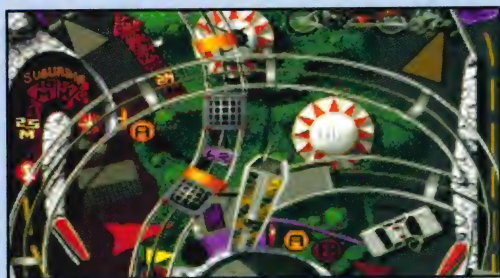
## FOUR TIMES TABLE

*Extreme Pinball* offers the player a choice of four different tables, each one telling a slightly different story. On each one, you have the option to omit the scoreboard (which saves distractions), and every table has its own unique music and



### URBAN CHAOS

Similar to *True Pinball's* Law 'n' Justice, this table represents a sprawling futuristic city known as Televox 203. In a world dominated by the InterNet, a communications breakdown has led to the city becoming unstable and decaying. All you have to do is fight crime and restore order. Things to watch out for are opportunities to use your bullet proof vest ball savers to stop the ball going down the drain and ways of activating the Net links, thus restoring order – and getting a few good bonuses into the bargain.



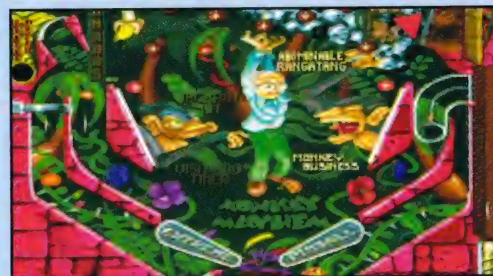
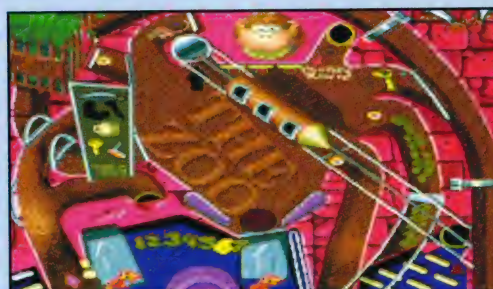
### ROCK FANTASY

The Rock Makers are the band of the century. Or they will be once you've brought all the players together. All you have to do then is supply them with a stage to perform up and a giant video screen to display their promos on. Avoid the crafty management types and supply the band with some glitzy equipment to make their concert go off with a bang. The dire music, however, may put you off as no one should have to listen to pap like this when we already have Bon Jovi and Bruce Dickinson!



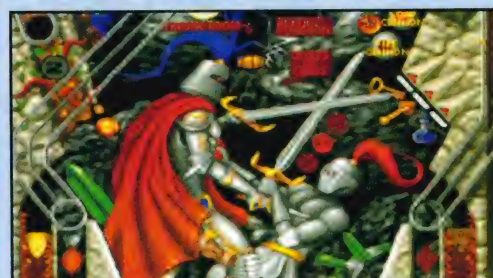
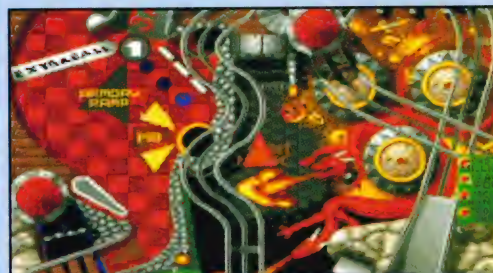
### MONKEY MAYHEM

The best table of the lot, it is riddled with cartoon noises and silly ideas, but is the most interesting to play (and the easiest). You are an astronaut crashed on Monkey Planet and with only the hamsters to help you, you've got to negotiate your way through the wildlife, including a bizarre giraffe, childish monkeys and the fearsome Rangatang. The monorail is a bit of a lifesaver as far as bonuses go but you can save yourself a lot of trouble by capturing certain animals and putting them in the zoo.



### MEDIAEVAL KNIGHTS

Somewhat unsurprisingly, this involves knights, trolls, dragons, vampire bats and so forth. Your ball turns to a moat ring occasionally, and if you get into the Troll's Lair, watch out for his gruesome appendage as he lights up the letters. There's a swamp, a dragon ramp and a handful of other odds and ends, but this is by the far the least interesting of the tables. It takes quite a long time to achieve any reasonable scores and because the ball is exactly the same hue as the background, the eye often deceives and you watch it plop down the drain.



## COMMENT

### GARY

Let's deal with the bad points of this game first. Each game, each option and each screen takes so long to load, you could play a few levels of *Doom II* inbetween. Panning up and down the very flat, very boring screens is not fluid and frequently the ball moves faster than both the eye and, more importantly, the screen. The general design of the four tables is occasionally very daft. The mediaeval one is essentially steel grey. The ball is steel grey. Can you follow it easily? It's all very well having a game that causes the player to exert a bit of pressure and skill, but this is only a pinball game and making it sometimes unplayable seems a tad daft. The score screens are irritating but, can be switched off – leaving you unsure until the end of the game how well you're doing. The four tables are only viewable from a top-down angle. *True Pinball* had good 3D realisations and the options for two others – why hasn't this? The good points of this game? It's a pinball game, and I love pinballs. But frankly, this is the dulllest game I've ever played. Avoid at all costs.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	40
ANIMATION	57
SOUND FX	72
MUSIC	66
LASTABILITY	39
PLAYABILITY	53
OVERALL	44



# REVIEW





## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE  
CONTINUES: PASSWORD  
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE MAY

PRICE £TBA

BY WARNER INT.

PLAYERS 1

# PO'ed



Imagine, if you will, that you are a very fat, very greasy cook known as Ox. It is your job to be

unpleasant, sweaty and unshaven, probably dropping fag ends into the potato skin gruel you churn up everyday for the ungrateful army squaddies you are working with.

No, that's not a job ad for Head Chef at the Hilton, but is the basic set-up for the character you become playing *PO'ed* – a rather unpleasant thought, methinks? Now Ox's job is a simple one. All his mates are dead and it is up to him to go through their military spaceship, killing off the aliens and assorted other nasties that offed his chums. Initially, all you have to help you are what you can lay your hands on – a pair of slippers and a frying pan. Along the way, you'll add to this a jet pack to help you fly, a meat-cleaver, other kitchen appliances and then finally the big guns left behind by the dead squaddies.

So what *PO'ed* really seems to be is another *Doom*-esque runaround, with an amusing scenario and the ability to fly. But is this this is enough to make it interesting and worth your hard-earned fifty squids?

## WEAPONS OF DEFECTION

Ox has up to ten weapons that he can collect during his battles, ranging from the frying pan, through the drill (excellent for blood splattering over the screen and you then get Ox's hand wiping it all away afterwards) right up to a plasma gun, a machine pistol and a wonderful flame thrower.



BUTCHER KNIFE



FRYING PAN



BFD-90



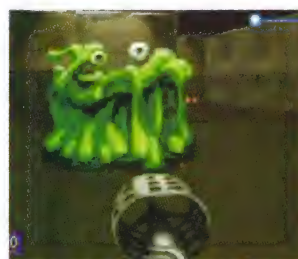
WAILER



PULSE GUN



MISSILE-CAM



THIS WEE CHAPPIE IS JUST BEGGING TO BE FRIED BY THE IMPRESSIVE FLAME THROWER THAT Ox FINDS DURING HIS DESPERATE RUN AROUND THE MILITARY SPACESHIP.

## LEVELS OF

The various levels in *PO'ed* are not very complicated or long, but contain enough surprises and twists to keep you going. *Sponge*, for instance, is like a huge maze as you try to work out exactly where you've been before, while *Core* features a particu-

### RAPA NUI

Those big stone idols, which appear to have travelled from Easter Island, have been transported into this level, where you also have to blast away at some Meccano cars on a checkerboard floor inside a Grecian palace. This game is surreal!



### SOLERI

A multi-leveller that, no matter which direction you turn in, seems brimming over with violent, well-armed little gits, none of whom want you to see the light of day ever again. You need some quick wits to get through this one.





## COMMENT

**MATT**

Sadly, while *PO'ed* starts off looking quite weird and interesting, it soon becomes repetitive and boring. The initial speed and look of the game sets things off in the right direction, but once you become accustomed to the wafer-thin scenery, you realise that perhaps not enough time went into each level's design. The programmers seem to have included a few features that are only there to prove that the game isn't a *Doom* rip-off, but I think I would have preferred a decent copy than a duff original product. There are a number of things about *PO'ed* that I'm quite taken by – the interesting weapons and downright surreal monsters – but these are quickly overshadowed by the general weakness of the game. As far as killing the enemy goes the game is often far too easy, and the levels only last as long as they do due to the design forcing you round and round the same terrain. All said and done, we're still looking at a game that has received a fair score, so it's certainly not to be ignored. We would, however, suggest you (oh no, here comes a cliché!) 'try before you buy'. D'oh!

## DEPRAVITY

larly bizarre green sludge thing that takes a lot of beating unless you've some weapons better than the frying pan or gas-ring lighter. Some of the beasties follow you from level to level, by the way. Among the better levels are:

### SHUTTLE

A bit of a roller-coaster ride around the struts and platforms in the shuttle bay. Lots of good opportunities to blow the ghoulies away, but you have to be careful using the jet pack – it's easy to crash into immobile objects at inconvenient moments.



### JUMP

A series of trampolines and mattresses get you around this level, fighting off the little yellow Amazons with the pointed breasts and squeaky shrieks. A good, fun, level to get you used to the game and almost too easy to find the exit from.



## CAMPING IT UP

Before getting too involved with the game, it helps if you take a quick whizz around the level known as Boot Camp. Here Ox can have the chance to get to grips with a variety of weapons and the jet pack amid a pot pourri of the villains. Getting the hang of the jet pack might take a few moments, and remembering to rapidly alter your viewpoint is important, but it won't be long before you're wiping the floor with the bad guys. And once you've mastered all that, it's on to the real thing.



## IT'S A DIRTY BUSINESS

The level of humour in the game is, well, low. Toilet level really. All rather juvenile. Depending on how you view the things, the first real nasties you come across look like either a cooked chicken come to life, or the bum and lower legs of a corpse. Either way, it appears to fart deadly puffs of, er, well – farts really. Likewise, on the Boot Camp level, the game opens in a men's shower room and toilet block with these aforementioned dismembered (whoops, pardon) legs emerging from the lavatory cubicles. When shot by a laser of any sort, they also disappear in a cloud of blue methane gas. Subtle or what?

**THE BUTTHEADS** ADD A WHOLE NEW MEANING TO THE PHRASE "GETTING A BUM DEAL".



## COMMENT

**GARY**

For a 3D game, *PO'ed* is remarkably uninspired in places. For instance, rising platforms are as thin as paper and the ladders seem flimsy. *PO'ed* starts quite well and looks very promising but by the fifth level, your interest begins to wane as nothing new happens. It doesn't get notably harder, the weapons get more powerful and after a few practise rounds, you quickly get the hang of where to go to avoid dying and get the best vantage points to knock off the bad guys. Visually, it's unimpressive – you rapidly get the impression that the programmers had more space to fill than imagination to go with it. The jet pack is one of those ideas that may well have come out of a "what can we do that *Doom* doesn't" but apart from being something to get you around, it doesn't contribute anything to the gameplay. You don't suddenly lose power, it has no weaknesses and the baddies can't get hold of one. Now, that would have been interesting. All in all *PO'ed* shows promise but does not deliver enough. It really could have been so much better.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	79
ANIMATION	88
SOUND FX	85
MUSIC	78
LASTABILITY	75
PLAYABILITY	76

## OVERALL





## GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE  
CONTINUES: MEMORY CARD  
SKILL LEVELS: N/A

RELEASE APRIL

PRICE £44.99

BY EA

PLAYERS 1

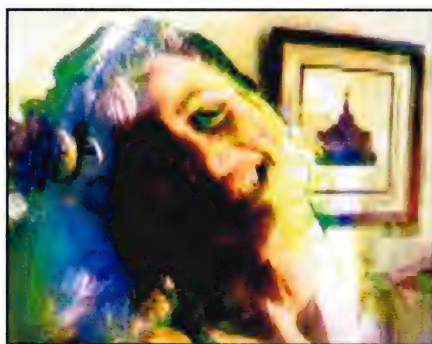


here you are, performing your mind reading act in a downtown San Francisco bar when in walks a vision of Slavic beauty. Plumping down more cash than you've ever seen, she explains that she's from a wealthy Russian household whose patriarch, Vladimir Pozok, has just died in mysterious circumstances. Papa, it transpires, was Russia's leading expert on the paranormal, ESP and so on. Your new friend explains that your psychic talents are wasted here in this dingy lounge bar, and she's offering you the wads, and possibly her body, to find out who did her darling Daddy in. And why.

This is the quandary facing young Eric Fox, the leading character (and the personality which the player adopts) in *Psychic Detective*. Actually, for Eric, it's clearly not that much of a quandary as he quickly takes the money and goes with the girl to a wake at the Pozok family mansion, full of guests all celebrating Vladimir's life and achievements. There you meet a variety of lowlifes, social inadequates and society leeches who will form the basis of your investigation. So it's all quite simple. Jump from mind to mind, personality to personality, scum to scum, and discover just who did what and when.

*Psychic Detective* is a full FMV interactive adventure, allowing you the chance to see every incident and see every conversation going on simultaneously throughout the story. You'll need to play it more than once to get the full story and indeed there are fourteen alternate endings so that just one decision you make (be it a person you follow, an object you collect or a direction you take) can alter the outcome. Filmed around San Francisco, *Psychic Detectives* has actually had its premier not at a games Expo but at a series of film festivals around the world causing even *Empire* to review it!

The final stretch of the game includes playing Black Diamond, a board game akin to chess or backgammon, against the villain of the piece which determines how skilful you've been, how well you've chosen your friends and, ultimately, which denouement you're going to see.



# Psychic Detective



THE IMAGES ERIC RECEIVES WHENEVER HE ATTEMPTS A MIND MELD RANGE FROM VIOLENT TO PORNOGRAPHIC.

ERIC'S INQUISITIVE NATURE LEADS HIM TOWARDS A LOT OF CLUES. AND JUST AS MUCH DANGER!



## THE HEAD BANGERS

*Psychic Detective* has an amazingly large cast of characters – over one hundred individuals appear during the course of the game. Of these, just a handful could be considered to be major players in the scenario, and here they are. Remember, in the words of another, famous television investigator into the paranormal "Trust no one."



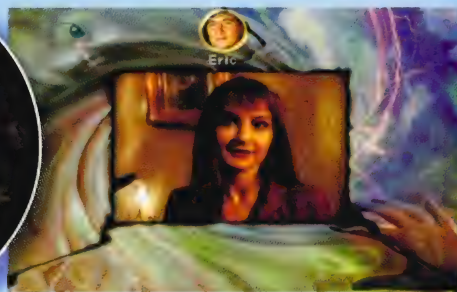
### MONICA POZOK (Zachary Barton)

Pampered and spoiled younger daughter of Vladimir, Monica is also rather wet and easily manipulated. Unlike Laina, she is quite happy to give all her father's secrets over to MirageQuest because she just wants the good times back.



### LAINA POZOK (Beata Pozniak)

She asks Eric to become embroiled in her family's affairs, but what are her real motives? She clearly has some psychic potential of her own, so why does she want Eric to do her dirty work?



### SERGEI NOSENKO (Eric Beavers)

A young man who, in a moment of youthful impulsiveness, earned the wrath of Vladimir Pozok because of Sergei's romantic liaison with Laina. As a result, Sergei is no longer the man he was, but his mind may conceal some secrets of his own.





## ERIC FOX (played by Kevin Breznahan)

Apart from possessing the only vaguely sensible name in the game, Eric is the hero of *Psychic Detective*, the person whose mind the player occupies. However, he's not a hero in the Clark Kent mould. No, Eric is a bit of a sleazebag, always thinking about his conquests over women, happily working in two-bit lounges doing his magical mind act to rich and stupid punters. He has few morals and even fewer scruples and seems reasonably familiar with the inside of a police cell! Maybe Eric has a few secrets he'd rather keep hidden as well. He seemed to be a rather unhappy boy, going by his own flashbacks, and maybe therein lies the clue to why exactly he has his powers and wants to take on the case. Aside from Laina's money and the promise of a bit of nookie with her when it's all over.



ABUSED BY HIS FATHER AS A BOY, ERIC SUFFERS FROM CLAUSTROPHOBIA. BUT WHAT ELSE?

## MIND GAMES

The best way to examine the characters is to play Disc One over and over again, getting inside everybody's head. That way you get an overall perspective of what is going on, who is being less than honest to whom, and just why everyone is a little bit afraid of Madam Tikunov. Eric can stay inside most people until they're out of range, but strong telepaths can expunge him. Both Laina and Madam Tikunov are none too pleased when Eric pays them an unwanted visit, but at least one other is capable of zapping you back to Eric's body without any warning. As with everything in the game, take note of everything that is said, done, touched or looked at. Dolls, rings, photographs, even coffee cups seem to have some significance to the overall picture. But be warned, not everyone will survive Disc One, and it's not very pleasant being inside someone's head when someone else tries to hack it off. You might get back into Eric, but the disorientation could cost you very dearly...

## COMMENT

### STEVE

This is EA's most ambitious attempt

at a fully interactive FMV game to date, and while the plot is incredibly intricate and there are a number of storylines along the way, the limited button pressing still reduces the game to a basic multiple-choice test. As Eric jumps from mind to mind, viewing the action from his victims' eyes, it's hard not to be impressed by the sheer number of angles the action is filmed from. As such, while talking to Laina, it's possible to visit their heads and watch them talking to you! When the novelty wears off, the plot kicks in with the evil Max up to no good, and Laina less than trustworthy. However, the objects needed for information are easily missed as the story unfolds, and this seems to be the only way the programmers can sustain interest. I commend EA for a very impressive take on the jaded FMV idea, but ultimately the player's interaction is limited to the odd press of a button. And no plot is enough to make that interesting for more than five minutes.



# REVIEW

### MAX MIRAGE (Jarion Monroe)

Suave and sophisticated organiser of MirageQuest, a programme designed to show people how to find happiness through realising their full potential. Yeah, Eric thinks that sounds dodgy as well.



### SYLVIA BOURGET (Marcia Pizzo)

Vampish assistant to Max Mirage, she seems very eager to help Max get his hands on Vladimir Pozok's secrets. She has clearly made a friend in Monica but both Laina and Chad distrust her.



### CHAD BITALSKI (William Hall)

Money minded cousin to Laina and Monica, he's a bit of a wheeler-dealer who also sees his uncle's secrets as something to bring in a few dollars. However, he has not foreseen Sylvia's persuasive manner.



### VLADIMIR POZOK (Rob Nilsson)

Just because he's dead doesn't mean he has lessened his grip on his family. His experiments into the paranormal were both awesome and destructive, but which, if any, of his offspring have inherited his powers? And just how does he influence them now?



### MADAM TIKUNOV (Sharon Lockwood)

The Pozok family's housekeeper who, some believe was closer to Vladimir than would have been considered professional. Not lacking psychic powers of her own, she is a major source of information to Eric. Why are most of the Pozok family frightened of her?



### MOKI VALDEZ (Luis Drolepeza)

Laina describes him as a "psychic pimp", which isn't too bad a description. No one seems to like him and he's not too keen on them either, but he does know far more than he lets on. He'll always turn up when you least expect him.





## BLACK DIAMOND

Chad seems very keen to sell the game board to Eric, but Madam Tikunov is, unsurprisingly, vehement about keeping it. She'll eventually try to teach you its secrets – listen to her, because at the climax to the mystery, you need to play the game to win. You are offered a variety of pieces at that point – be careful what you choose. The state of each individual piece is determined by their real world counterparts. Opt to use a piece that represents a dead person, an emotionally weakened person or broken object and your ability to play the game is drastically lessened.

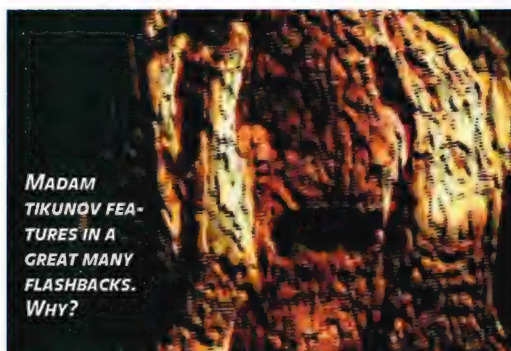


YOU NEED TO MASTER THIS BOARD GAME JUST AS MUCH AS THE MAIN GAME TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF SURVIVING PSYCHIC DETECTIVE.



## KEEPING TABS

Something else that Eric needs to locate as the game goes are the Psychic Collectors, four special generators that will enable him to project his mind further afield and so learn even more about his foes. However they, too, are after the cylindrical things, and will go to far greater lengths to get them. And Laina isn't being much help. She seems to know where they are, but is reluctant to let Eric find them unless she's present. And at the slightest hint of trouble, she vanishes, leaving Eric to pick up the pieces.



MADAM TIKUNOV FEATURES IN A GREAT MANY FLASHBACKS. WHY?



SHE'S BEEN DOING THE ROUNDS OF THE BEDS, TOO. NOT BAD FOR SOMEONE WHO LOOKS OVER 90!

## COMMENT

GARY

With fourteen alternative endings and spread over three CDs jam-packed with FMV scenes, *Psychic Detective* seems to be good value for money. What *Psychic Detective* offers over animated interactive games such as *Myst* and *D* is a genuine sense of mystery, and you have the ability to completely change the direction of the game. Simply listen in to what every character has to say, take every option presented and get the background on every object and the game will take a long time. On top of this you need the time to formulate who has done what to whom and why – value for money indeed. But there are weaknesses – the acting is almost laughably awful with only Madam Tikunov and Max deserve any real plaudits. Wading through five hours of it (possible but not probable if you play the game well) sounds like torture. I liked *Psychic Detective* but it suffers from the same problem as all interactive adventures – although it certainly takes longer than most to work it all out, having done so, you're unlikely to go back for a second attempt.

## RATING

GRAPHICS	60
ANIMATION	63
SOUND FX	69
MUSIC	77
LASTABILITY	85
PLAYABILITY	84

## OVERALL

84



# MAXIMUM



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***THE VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE - ISSUE #6 ON SALE APRIL 27TH!***

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# IMPORT ROUND-UP

## WINNING ELEVEN

**By: Konami**

It's nice to know that Konami listens to criticism regarding their products. We were never the greatest fans of *Winning Eleven: World Soccer* (or *Goal Storm* as it was known over here) simply because it was too simplistic. Tackling was simply a matter of bundling your opponent over, the special bicycle kicks and diving headers never failed to go in, and a goal was guaranteed everything the player shot from a 45° degree angle. Great then that by releasing an update, that Konami could take the opportunity to rectify such faults. If only.

Sadly, this second edition of *Winning Eleven: World Soccer* fails to capitalise on the chance to make amends and, with the exception of a handful of smaller additions, this is ostensibly the same game. Once again, Konami's attractive but badly-animated polygon sprites race on to a variety of pitches following an updated rendered intro. From there, basic passing, shooting, lobbing gameplay kicks in, with the players seemingly skating across one of three pitch surfaces remaining intact. The new additions include a more distant view, slightly smoother graphics, and (despite the 45° and special move faults) the goalies do behave a little more intelligently than before. Whereas the first game's keepers simply dived left and right and jumped, *Winning Eleven: World Soccer*'s get a hand to the ball, palming it away, and jump across for corners far more than they ever did before.

As before, there's something very playable at the core of *Winning Eleven: World Soccer*. The game races along at a fair old lick, and the assorted shots and headers add an arcade feel to the proceedings, almost making this reviewer forgive its simplicity. However, despite the three difficulty levels, all the goalies remain as stupid as ever and scoring becomes a tedious routine. *Adidas Power Soccer* is still the benchmark by which all others are compared, and releases like *Winning Eleven: World Soccer* only go to accentuate this.

(SM)



OVERALL  
**72**



## FIRE PRO WRESTLING

**BY: Human**

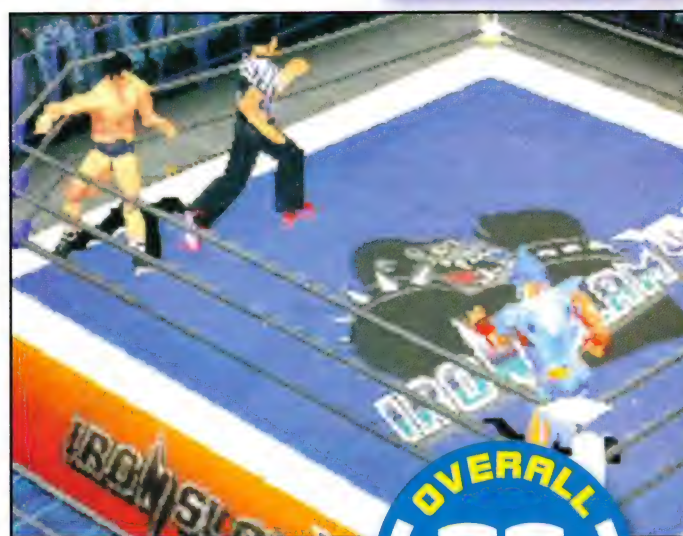
Human have made a less than impressive start in the world of the PlayStation, as seen with the abysmal *Hyper Formation Soccer*, which Ocean have now opted to drop it from their release schedule. Now, Human are abandoning football to turn to the more rough and tumble world of pro wrestling. With *Touken Retsuden* already available on import and impressing us with its range of moves and speed, in order to gain a submission, *Fire Pro Wrestling* offers a wider range of oddball characters. Larger sprites add a suitably macho look to the proceedings but sadly, the action is so slow and plodding, it's as if Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks were to rumble after fifteen pints and a big curry.

Following the obligatory rendered intro where the ten fighters are shown in their variety of masks, horned helmets and weights, the game opens offering the user a choice of an individual exhibition match or a tour of the circuit, where the other nine wrestlers appear in order of ability. In terms of appearance, Human have really gone to town. The polygon-based wrestlers look superb, ranging from the ever-present Power Ranger lookalikes the Japanese seem to like, to big fat blokes wearing shades and the ordinary Joes who are the general all-rounders. Each of the wrestlers is equipped with a handful of moves and throws, ensuring the player can throw, pin and stomp their player into submission – all of which is overseen by a vigilant on-screen ref. Surprisingly, the ring itself is rather small – and certainly too small for any real wrestling and bouncing off the ropes to take place. This leads to the game's second fault, wherein as soon as a fighter is felled, a boring pressing of the Dpad and buttons to get them upright begins, almost certainly followed by another grapple. As such, there's not so much of the bouncing on ropes to knock someone flying that graced *Touken Retsuden*, and the game gets rather dull. In all, rather than rivalling the likes of Acclaim's WWF licence, *Fire Pro Wrestling* is about as exciting as the old Saturday afternoon bouts with the aforementioned Big Daddy – and even this won't get old ladies swinging their handbags at the in-ring events. None of the speed, and none of the variety – two (too) great losses. (SM)

ONE OF THE POWER RANGER LOOKALIKES RECEIVES A PUNCH IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD, TOWARDS THE END OF A BOUT.



AS SOON AS A FOE IS KNOCKED TO THE GROUND, STOMP ON THEM TO REMOVE FURTHER ENERGY.



OVERALL  
63





# KILLING ZONE



THE MUMMY LANDS ON HIS OPPONENT IN A CLOUD OF DUST.



**BY: Naxasoft**

Things are really getting silly now. We've had

wrestlers, monsters, aliens and robots battling out in raised arenas, and now more people want to jump on the *Toshinden* bandwagon. As *Killing Zone* hitches a ride using famous monsters from countless Hammer and Ray Harryhausen B-movies as its combatants, it's hard not to imagine unscrupulous software houses looking to current television fads to bung into their standard 3D fighting game engine. If the *Rugrats* ever face off against characters from *London's Burning* in such a title, I won't be at all surprised.

*Killing Zone's* fighters include a snake-bodied Gorgon, Frankenstein's monster, and a skeleton who'll be rather familiar to fans of Rare's *Killer Instinct* coin-op. In addition to an Egyptian mummy and a handful of *Virtua Fighter* clones, the basic game is a beat 'em up set within a raised dais with the player's chosen character fending off the aforementioned rivals across a series of 'best of three' bouts. Each character begins the match equipped with a large energy bar, and depletion of this or being tossed off the edge of the arena means instant death. With me so far?

Actually, I'm being a bit unfair, as *Killing Zone's* choice of mythological creatures works in its favour. The attributes of each character allow for almost comedic moments which slot into the relatively well-paced fighting scenes well – with Kal the skeleton often reduced to a pile of bones, while Vilken (the Frankenstein creature) readjusts his neck bolts after every bolt. Similarly, fans of special moves are admirably catered for, with Batch the Minotaur suitably equipped with goring moves, and Kal morphing into a huge skull.

The main downfall with *Killing Zone* is that it is all-too familiar. The special moves are merely a diversion from the ultimately repetitive trading of punches, and rapid pressing of the facia buttons is often a better idea than careful structuring of moves. With *Tekken II* here and now, these second-rate offerings will hopefully dry up – meaning that *Killing Zone* and its many lookalikes are destined for obscurity. Mind you, we never thought anyone would buy *Zero Divide* for the UK but Ocean did...

(SM)



KAL IS A MASTER OF THE SWORD, AND HIS LIGHT FRAME MEANS HE MOVES TREMENDOUSLY FAST.



OVERALL  
71



## CHORO Q

**By: Takara**

I wonder what, exactly, *Choro Q* means. Perhaps it means dull, uninteresting racing game. If it does, hey, what a good translation. So, what makes this any the more interesting than any other rally cross game? Can you drive the car across the terrain better? Is the two-player game vastly different? Do they handle corners better? Are the six different courses any more exciting? Answer: no to all these questions, which begs the question, what is *Choro Q* for? Well, fundamentally it looked interesting; the vehicles are all squat little machines that, whilst not exactly looking like the VW Beetle on the cover, are at least variations on that theme. No sleek, super-powered Porches or even a souped up Ford Escort – here they're all jazzed up Minis, dodgy hatchbacks and the like. My favourite is the chunky black one, whose inability to take corners at speed is humorous to say the least, and makes losing a sheer joy. Oh, that's *not* the idea of the game? The courses are rather average and drab, although the muddy mountainside one is great because if you drive off the side, you bounce down onto the track below without being allowed to take the lead. Cheating is a definite no-no here. The tracks all have some interesting quirks but you do feel that the CPU controlled cars have got all the aces, because if you slow down to take a corner with the same ease they do, you lose power too quickly. You have no control of the automatic gears and so any skill or manoeuvrability is rather redundant. Not the world's greatest racing game, not particularly joyful and rather boringly animated. Give it a miss.

(GR)



THE GRAPHICS ARE A BIZARRE MIX OF MOTOR TOON GRAND PRIX AND RIDGE RACER.



ALTHOUGH A VARIETY OF VEHICLES ARE ON OFFER, THE RACING ACTION REMAINS SLOW AND CLUMSY.



OVERALL  
58

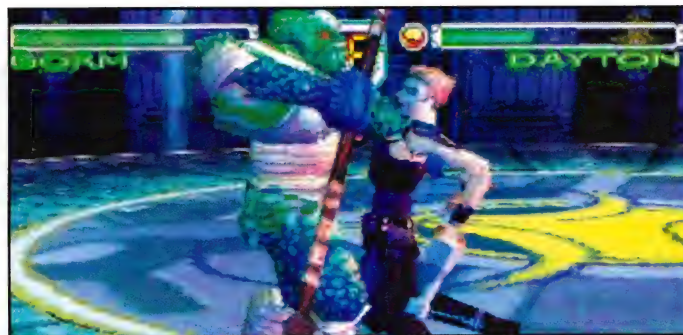


# INDEX & GLOSSARY



Here we are, already into the eighth issue of *PlayStation Plus*, and so we thought it might be useful to give you some help in tracking down past reviews you might want to re-read while deciding which games to buy. Rather obviously, the chart opposite tells you the issue number and the overall rating each game got – including all of the games featured in our regular Import Round-Up section.

We are also aware that, for many people, the Sony PlayStation is the first ever games console they have owned. Therefore it seems appropriate to provide a quick glossary to some of the frequently used terminology found in our reviews and features. To those who've been playing games since those halcyon days of the ZX Spectrum, these might all seem terribly obvious. But for newcomers to the gaming industry, a platform could be the place you catch a train from, a sprite is a fizzy drink and a joypad sounds like something from an Ann Summers catalogue needing half a dozen HP11s!



GAME REVIEWED	ISSUE	OVERALL SCORE (%)
3D LEMMINGS	2	81
ACTUA SOCCER	5	92
ADIDAS POWER SOCCER	7	93
AGILE WARRIOR	3	85
AIR COMBAT	4	80
ALONE IN THE DARK	3	82
ASSAULT RIGS	2	81
BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2	5	71
BRAIN DEAD 13	7	18
CRITICOM	4	82
CYBERIA	5	60
CYBER SLED	1	69
CYBERSPEED	2	71
D	5	83
DEFCON 5	3	72
DESCENT	4	90
DESTRUCTION DERBY	1	90
DISCWORLD	2	71
ESPN EXTREME GAMES	2	90

## PLATFORM

A platform game will involve play where a character under the player's control has to leap between various levels (or platforms) collecting objects, jumping on baddies heads, and, er... stuff like that. On the whole, platforms games are nearly always side-viewed 2D games. There are, however, exceptions to this rule, such as *Jumping Flash*. (General examples: *Rayman*, *Gex*, *Mickey's Wild Adventure*).

## ARCADE

The term 'Arcade game' is probably the most nebulous of them all. It's actually easier defining what isn't an arcade than what is, but an arcade romp will usually have fairly simple controls, move at a fair pace, and often be some sort of shoot 'em up. Colourful graphics are a must, and, well... ooh I don't really know! The best thing to do is imagine whether you'd expect to find that game in an actual amusement arcade. You'd be likely to see *Gex* in an arcade, but *X-COM*? I don't think so.

## SHOOT 'EM UP

Put simply, a game referred to as a shoot 'em up is one where, for the most part, the action relies on shooting lots of 'things' as they swarm onto the screen. This could be a human character armed and running about, but more often than not it involves some sort of craft flying about the screen with thousands of lasers beaming all over the shop. A particularly popular format for the Japanese (eg *Raiden*, *Galaga*).

## BEAT 'EM UP

All beat 'em up games have one thing in common: violence. In its simplest form, a beat 'em up game will see one character standing on the left of the screen and another on the right. The top of the screen will contain some sort of energy bar indicating the two opponents' strength, and once the fight begins it's down to the players to make use of their character's moves and special skills to best their enemy. These games generally take quite some mastering (eg *Criticom*, *Tekken*).

## SIMS

Sims (otherwise known as Simulations) is the term usually given to the more 'serious' game. If a game features a plane that can be controlled with one button – leaving all the other buttons free to shoot aliens with your various Death Rays – it's an arcade shoot 'em up. If, however, the most exciting thing the game features is sitting for five hours as your jumbo approaches Gatwick, it's a sim. Passive sports games such as *Konami Links* and *Pete Sampras Extreme* are known as sports sims for, well, rather obvious reasons really. In previous years, software company Maxis have made it into a sort of trade mark (eg *SimCity*, *SimTower*, *SimEarth*, etc).

## RPG

Role Playing Games. Traditionally, RPGs feature loin-clothed barbarians, thieves, wizards, lots of nasty orcs, and female characters with chests the size (and often the shape) of Lancashire. An RPG can be anything from turn-based strategy, to first-person perspective dungeon exploring, as long as there's a strong fantasy element (eg *Warhammer*, *Dungeon Master*).

## GAME CODE

These games don't just appear out of nowhere, you know. Oh no, some poor sod has to sit and type it all in – and that's where the code comes from. 10 MAKE GOOD GAME. 20 GOTO 10. RUN. There, that should just about do it. So when we talk about 'seeing an early code', we just mean that we've seen the most recent program available.

## ENGINES

(eg "Defcon 5 has a lovely 3D engine, but...") We normally refer to an 'engine' when we're talking about the main 'meat' of a game's programming. *Doom* would be nothing if it wasn't for the excellent 3D engine, while *Tekken*'s 'engine' would deal with shifting all those polygons at high speed.

## DEVELOPERS

The developers are the people physically programming the game. These are often the unsung heroes, so while you might think Virgin are the best games-producing company in the world, they'd be nothing if it weren't for the actual developing companies on their books – though Bullfrog issued the PlayStation *Magic Carpet*, it's actually been created by developers, Krisalis).

## DISTRIBUTORS

The opposite to the above, the distributors are the big boys that actually get the game out into the world. Any 'bedroom Barry' can write a game, but to distribute it across the globe takes the marketing might of your Electronic Arts, Oceans, Virgins, and Acclaims.

## COIN-OP

Coin-op = a coin-operated machine. Basically, we're talking about the machines you find down the arcades or in your local chippy. Traditionally, these showed-off the best games around, and it's only with the advent of the so-called 'Next Generation' machines that we've been able to duplicate this quality of game in the home. These days, anything decent that appears on the coin-op scene will already be on its way into your home.





EXECTOR	3	62
FIFA '96	3	92
FIRESTORM: THUNDERHAWK 2	4	86
FLOATING RUNNER	6	81
GEX	6	68
GOAL STORM	3	66
GUNBIRD	5	74
GUNNER'S HEAVEN	1	80
HEBERKE POPOITTO	3	42
HERMIE HOPPERHEAD	2	38
HI-OCTANE	4	76
HORNED OWL	5	68
HYPER FORMATION SOCCER	4	33
IMPACT RACING	7	82
IN THE HUNT	5	79
JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE	5	60
JUMPING FLASH	1	89
KING'S FIELD	4	84
KRAZY IVAN	5	73
LOADED	2	75
LONE SOLDIER	3	72

MAGIC CARPET	7	90
METAL JACKET	3	65
MICKEY'S WILD ADVENTURE	5	66
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM	7	37
MOTOR TOON GP	1	51
MYST	6	76
NAMCO MUSEUM VOL.1	4	84
NAMCO MUSEUM VOL.2	7	63
NBA IN THE ZONE	6	85
NBA JAM: TOURNAMENT	1	86
NOVASTORM	2	55
OFF-WORLD INTERCEPTOR	4	68
PANZER GENERAL	6	59
PGA TOUR '96	3	69
POWER INSTINCT 2	5	48
POWER SERVE 3D TENNIS	2	48
PRIMAL RAGE	7	77
PRIME GOAL EX	4	67
RAIDEN PROJECT	1	72
RAYMAN	1	59
REVERTHON	5	21

**CONVERSION** A conversion occurs when you get a game already established on one format, converted over to another format. A conversion might involve manipulation of original code (eg *Primal Rage*'s coin-op code is jiggled about for the PlayStation version) or just a copy using new code (eg Williams starting PlayStation *Doom* from scratch). As a PlayStation owner, you'll no doubt get used to tons of crap 3DO conversions as time passes.

**HORIZONTAL/VERTICAL SCROLLING** Fairly obvious really, and a term generally associated with either shoot 'em ups or platform, games. *Raiden Project* is a vertically scrolling game, while *In The Hunt* is a horizontal scroller.

**SPRITES** While *Tekken* features characters put together 'mathematically' from a number of polygons, *Street Fighter Alpha* instead has a 'sprite' for each possible position. A sprite is just a picture, so there's a picture of Ryu for each of the animation frames needed for him to perform a fireball move.

**POLYGONS** Polygons are simply shapes put together to form a familiar figure. All the characters in *Tekken* are made up on polygons, so rather than needing an individual sprite for each move, the engine manipulates the shapes according to the rules its been fed. It also allows for different moves as the polygons really don't care how you look at them — they're 3D you see.

**LIGHT SOURCING** If you fly your spaceship past a bright explosion, the way the light reflects off your craft should, by rights, change to maintain a realistic 3D environment. Er... and that's how an apple works.

**ISOMETRIC VIEWS** Best described as the sort of view you'd expect if you watched a game from a security camera in the top corner of the room, the isometric view shows the action from above and to an angle. This is best used in games with small-scale graphics such as *Overkill* and *X-COM*, as it allows you to see around and in buildings. It also gives you a good feel for where you are in that game's world.

**FIRST PERSON PERSPECTIVE** *Doom* and *Alien Trilogy* are excellent examples of first person perspective games, as is *Ridge Racer* when you sit right inside the car. Basically, any game where your screen acts as the 'eyes' is a first person perspective game — as you turn your head to look around a corner, so your screen does.

**FMV** Full Motion Video is just what it says. When Luke Skywalker, er... I mean Mark Hamill wanders around being moody in *Wing Commander III*, the PlayStation is just acting like a CD video player.

**FORMAT** We talk about formats when we're referring to other game systems. "*Mortal Kombat* has appeared on a number of formats, and now it's the PlayStation's turn." The word 'platform' is also sometimes used in this way. Basically, the SNES is a format, the PC is a format, the Megadrive is a format, and the Saturn is a pile of poo. Oh sorry. Did I say that?

**SOFTWARE** Software is games, education packages, word processors — basically any 'program' that can be loaded into your machine.

**HARDWARE** The hardware is the machine itself. So one could say that *Doom* is the software that you load into your PlayStation while the PlayStation itself is the hardware you load *Doom* into.

**CUT-SCENES** Should you be so inclined, you're could find yourself playing *Johnny Bazookatone*, running around and having all the fun generally associated with platform games. Complete the level, and suddenly you're treated to a gorgeous, nay incidental, cut-scene. This will feature superior graphics and be used to either explain the plot further, or simply as a rather juicy reward for completing the level.

**POWER-UPS** Power-ups are generally advantageous items that make your on-screen character or craft more powerful. *Raiden*'s power-ups award you with more weapons and more power, while *Gex*'s allow you to breath fire, run faster, etc.

**PICK-UPS** Pick-ups, though essentially the same as power-ups, are generally referred to when we're describing icons and special items that reward the player with extra points or attributes less 'power-connected'. Collecting a 'Super Laser' is a power-up, collecting a first aid box is a pick-up. You get the idea...

**TOP-DOWN** This could very easily be called Bird's-Eye as it refers to games viewed from a, well, top-down perspective. *Raiden* is top-down, as are lots of the imported Japanese shoot 'em up games.





REVOLUTION X	3	48
RIDGE RACER	1	88
RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION	5	87
ROAD RASH	6	64
ROBO PIT	6	51
SHELLSHOCK	6	75
SHOCKWAVE	4	56
SIDEWINDER	7	64
STAHLFEDER	7	77
STREET FIGHTER 2: MOVIE	5	54
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA (NTSC)	5	90
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA (PAL)	7	91
STREET FIGHTER: THE MOVIE	2	67
STRIKER '96	2	69
SUPER BIG BROTHER...	6	53
TEKKEN	1	93
THE AQUANAUT'S HOLIDAY	4	53
THE NEED FOR SPEED	7	70
THE PERFECT GOLF	5	50

THEME PARK	2	85
TOTAL NBA	5	83
TOUKON RETSUDEN	3	84
TRUE PINBALL	5	92
TWIN BEE	3	55
TWISTED METAL	3	82
TWO-TEN KAKU	6	76
ULTIMATE PARODIUS	1	26
V TENNIS	3	58
WING COMMANDER 3	7	80
WARHAWK	3	82
WIPEOUT	1	91
WORLD CUP GOLF	5	80
WORMS	2	92
WWF WRESTLEMANIA	2	83
X-COM: ENEMY UNKNOWN	1	88
ZEITGEIST	2	43
ZERO DIVIDE	1	72

**INTERACTIVE** Interactive is a term completely over-used and abused by the video games industry. It's a term generally used when you aren't in complete and permanent control of the game's proceedings. You can happily watch Luke Skywalker... (damn, there I go again) Mark Hamill acting his little heart out, but at some point you'll have to 'interact' with him so that the game knows what you want to do.

**ADD-ONS** As far as in-game add-ons go, we're probably differentiating between a power-up (where you'll just suddenly 'have' laser) and an add-on that physically appears. Collect a homing missile add-on in *Assault Rigs* and it bolts onto your tank with a graphical appearance. If referring to PlayStation add-ons we probably mean peripherals such as MPEG cards and Multi-taps.

**CONTINUES** Pretty simple this. Though you might only get three lives to play with in your platform game, you could also get three 'continues'. This means that when the game is over you have a limited number of chances to continue from your last position (or pretty near) rather than return to the start. This is like having an extra credit or two in an arcade machine.

**CPU** The Central Processing Unit — the main 'thinking' area of the computer. We use this in the wrong context for the most part, but basically it's another way of referring to the computer without using the word 'computer' over and over! So, you can have *Ridge Racer's* computer-controlled drones, or CPU opponents. Take your pick.

**RENDERS** Renders aren't just pretty pictures drawn in 2D on a flat screen, but 'models' that have been generated by first explaining the object to the computer in full 3D. Though our lovely cover is only 2D, it has been created by first making a 3D wire-frame image and then adding shades, colour and lighting. This technique also allows you to manipulate images to better effect.

**MOTION-CAPTURE** Rather than Dave the programmer sitting and guessing how a goalkeeper looks in action, he can video a real life keeper and copy his actions into the machine for better realism. The next stage forward involves attaching sensors to the keeper, allowing the movement information to be input directly into the computer to then be mimicked.

**JOYPAD** That lovely grey thing that you hold in your hand and use to control each game you play. You can fire, side-step, and generally get about the place with this peripheral.

**DPAD** The DPad is the part of the joypad that deals with the direction controls alone (in the PlayStation's case, the four little arrows on the left). If we're saying that a joypad has an uncomfortable Dpad, well, you know what we mean now don't you!

**SOFTCO** Yet another example of us being lazy, the word Softco is used to talk about a software company without having to write 'software company'. See, takes up time and space doesn't it.





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## RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

### Various Special Modes



- 1) To gain the **extra cars** simply shoot all the ships in the *Galaga '88* section. You can use the **Laser-mode** for this cheat.
- 2) To access the **'Laser-mode'**: As soon as the game loads, hold L1, R1, Select and Down. When *Galaga '88* appears, press **▲** to fire.
- 3) To access the super-fast **'Rally-X-mode'** shoot down all of the *Galaga* ships using the **Laser-mode** cheat.

### Spinning Point Mode



Now this is brilliant! Select Time-Trial on any course, position the cursor over the Start option, and then press gas and brake simultaneously. You'll now find that, at selected corners during the race, the message 'Spinning-Zone' appears on the screen. At this point, try to spin out deliberately, getting as many 360's, 540's, or even 720's as possible. Style is very important, and your score will be shown in the Replay. NB: You can't combine the Spinning Point Mode and the Rally-X-mode.

# TIPS

## Plus

### Rear-View Mirror

Once in the race, press Start to pause the game. Now hold down **▲** and press L1 to turn the mirror off, or R1 to toggle the mirror back on (internal view only).

### Zoom In And Out

Once in the race, press Start to pause the game. Hold down **▲** and press L1 and R1 to zoom in and out (external view only). Pressing L1 and R1 together resets to the default distance.

## TOUKON RETSUDEN WRESTLING

### Access Characters

To access 'The Great Muta' go to the title screen and press: **●, Right, ▲, Up, ■, Left, X, Down, X, Down, ■, Left, ▲, Up, ●, Right, Select**. You can now select him by going to the third man listed (Keiji Muto) and pressing select.

To access 'Power Warrior' go to the title screen and press: **■, X, ■, X, ●, ▲, ●, ▲, Up, Down, Left, Right, Select**. You can now select him by going to the seventh man listed (Kensuke Sasaki) and pressing Select.

To access Kero-chan (the ring announcer) go to the title screen and press: **L1, L1, L2, R2, R2, R1, ▲, Down, X, Up, Select**. You can now select him by going to the third man from the bottom (Tenzan) and pressing select.

To access Tiger Hattori (the ref) go to the title screen and press: **Up, Down, Left, Right, ▲, X, ■, ●, L1, R1, L2, R2, Select**. You can now select him by going to the second man from the bottom (Kanemoto) and pressing select.



## WIPEOUT

### Airbrake Cheat

When you cross the line during a race, slam one of the air brakes on hard and turn 180°. The game will ignore that lap and let you do another one, altering your placing as relevant. The trick here is to have your craft facing backwards when crossing the line.



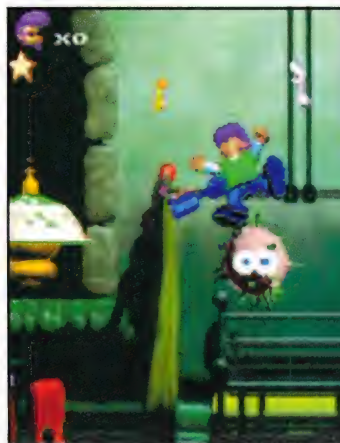
## JOHNNY BAZOOKATONE

### Codes

- Level #1 : ZARTACLA
- Level #2 : RINGMYBELL
- Level #3 : SCRAMBLED
- Level #4 : ANASTHETIC
- Level #5 : ETAGSLLEH

Also, enter the following passwords:

- KRISTIAN - for a level select.
- PILCHARD - makes you invisible to your opponent.





## DESTRUCTION DERBY

### Codes

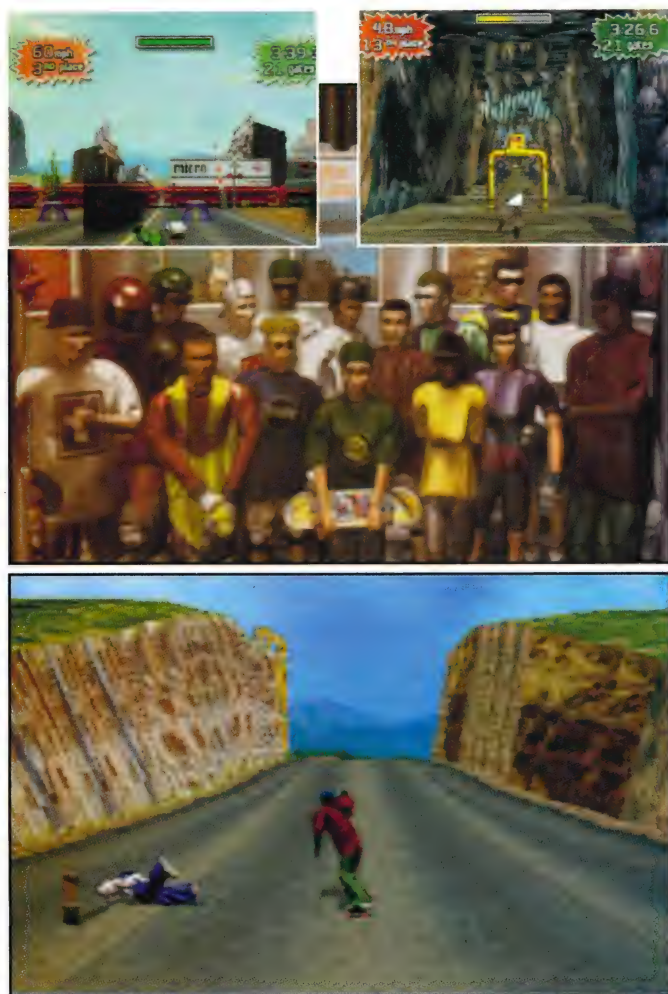
- 1) Start a Wreckin' Championship, entering your name as REFLECT! Now go to the practise mode and select the track, 'Monastery Ruins'. This is the track that normally appears as a reward for finishing 1st in the season.
- 2) Enter your name as !DAMAGE! for unlimited damage.



## ESPN EXTREME GAMES

### Cheat Codes

- 1) Enter the following code: 229, 013, 066, 016, 000, 000, 000, 000, 031. Now complete the first Utah race using Paul Dillon, and once finished you'll have \$1,110!
- 2) Enter the code: 254, 071, 216, 094, 085, 085, 177, 113, 104 to begin with only one race left — San Francisco.



## NBA JAM T.E.

### In-Game Cheats

Enter the following codes on the 'Tonight's Matchup' screen for the following effects:

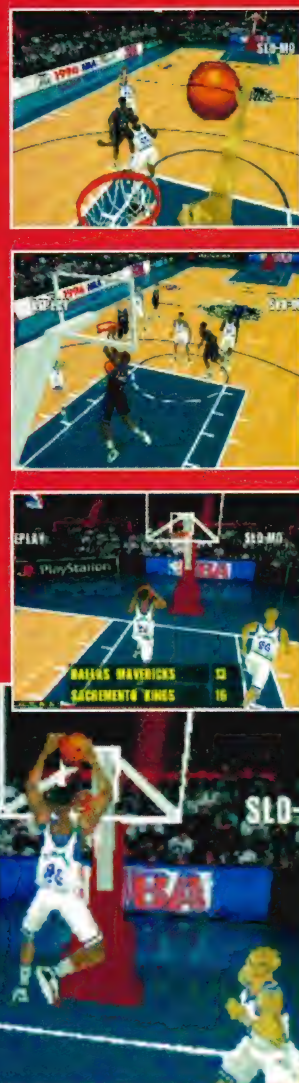
- Down, Right, Right, ●, ▲, Left — Permanently On-Fire
- Left, Right, X, ●, ●, X — Dunk Anywhere
- Right, Up, Down, Right, Down, Up — Defence
- Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Down, Up — 3s
- Left, Left, Left, Left, Circle, Right — Quick Hands
- Right, Right, Left, Right, X, X, Right — Max Power
- , ● (repeat five times) — Baby Mode
- ▲, X (repeat five times) — Huge Mode
- Up, Up, Down, Down, ▲ — Shot Percentage.

### Hidden Players

While holding the L1 and R1 buttons, enter these initials for the following hidden players:

Name	Initials	Birthday
Catling	CAT	JAN 2
Hutchinson	BAR	APR 9
Kirby	CHR	DEC 18
D Falcus	DAZ	AUG 6
Hodgeson	HOG	DEC 31
Tunncliffe	SAT	MAY 7
J Falcus	JAS	NOV 16
Jax	JAX	MAR 1
Mad Mike	MUS	DEC 24
McHugh	BAA	JUL 12
Gray	ROB	FEB 23
Higgins	TOM	FEB 19
Hill	ZIG	APR 7
Snake	SNK	JUN 15
J Moon	JAY	AUG 24
Chow Chow	CHD	MAY 5

Brutah	GOW	JUL 17
Weasel	DAN	JAN 2
Fumungus	GUN	JAN 11
Kabuki	KUB	APR 14
Max	LIZ	AUG 7
Magic Hair	STH	DEC 8
Sequoia	SAW	APR 10
Boo-Boo	THI	NOV 1
Pistol	WAN	JUN 10
Facime	DEL	OCT 19
Air Dog	AIR	JAN 21
Carlton	CAL	MAR 25
Divita	DIV	JUL 3
Goskie	GOS	JAN 6
Liptak	LIP	JAN 14
Rivett	REV	JUL 6
Turmell	TUR	JAN 31
Charles	CHA	MAY 4
Thomas	FNK	JAN 8
F Prince	FRS	FEB 2
Heavy D	HEA	JAN 9
H Clinton	HIL	NOV 6
Jazzy Jeff	JAZ	OCT 9
Benny	BEN	SEP 20
Blaze	BLZ	JAN 14
Hugo	HOR	JUN 12
Bird	LAR	JAN 15
Gorilla	APE	APR 2
Crunch	WOL	MAR 7
Clinton	BIL	JUN 3
Mike D	M D	JUL 1
Adrock	ADR	APR 6
Gordon	GOR	JUL 3
MCA	MCA	APR 9
Renaldo	REN	FEB 4
Shelley	SHY	JUN 8
Moore	MOE	JUN 8





## ASSAULT RIGS

### Level Codes

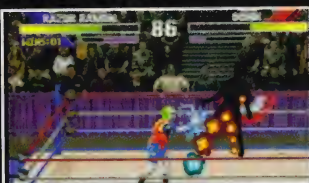
- 11) ARENA - ▲,▲,X,▲,●,■
- 12) PBM - ●,■,▲,▲,●,■
- 13) RAMPS - ▲,■,●,X,▲,■
- 14) OASIS - ▲,▲,X,■,■,X
- 15) HALLS - ●,X,▲,▲,▲,■
- 16) COASTER - ●,■,●,●,●,■
- 17) MINE - ▲,▲,▲,●,■,■
- 18) LOOK UP - ■,●,●,X,■,▲
- 19) DEADLINE - X,X,■,X,▲,●
- 20) FORT - X,■,X,▲,▲,■
- 21) STAIRWAY - ▲,▲,■,■,▲,▲
- 22) PARK A LOT - ■,■,▲,●,■,▲
- 23) ZAMCAM - ●,X,X,X,X,▲

- 24) SHOOT ME - ▲,■,■,▲,▲,▲
- 25) WILD - ▲,●,▲,▲,●,■
- 26) OIL RIG - ■,●,●,X,●,X
- 27) RIGHT WAY - X,●,●,▲,▲,■
- 28) WASTE TWO - ●,■,●,■,■,■
- 29) DODGE - ▲,■,●,X,●,●
- 30) AIR - ■,●,X,●,X,▲
- 31) JUMP - ●,■,X,▲,●,▲
- 32) ROOM 101 - ▲,■,X,●,■,X
- 33) FIREPOWER - X,X,▲,X,X,■
- 34) WAVE - X,●,■,●,●,■
- 35) PUSH OFF - ●,▲,X,▲,X,▲
- 36) PERIMETER - X,▲,▲,X,X,■
- 37) SPIRAL - X,▲,▲,X,▲,■

- 38) THE CASTLE - ■,▲,■,▲,■,X
- 39) FORTRESS - ■,X,▲,X,X,▲
- 40) LIFTS AHOY - ▲,X,▲,●,■,X
- 41) PUSH ME - ●,X,▲,●,▲,■



### Character Moves



#### DOINK

##### Moves:

**The Clapper** Away, Down, Toward, ■. Press square repeatedly to get four hits.

**Joybuzzer** Hold ■ for three seconds, then release.

**Happy Hammer** Toward, Toward, ●. Press X repeatedly to get up to four hits.

**Boxing Glove** ■ rapidly.

##### Grabs:

**Head Slam** Toward, Toward, ▲.

**Face Smash** Down, Down, ●. Press X repeatedly for up to four hits.

**Backbreaker** Down, Down, ●.

**Slam** Toward, Toward, ▲.

##### Combos:

**Links** (grab) Toward + ■.

**Initiators** ▲, ●.

**Mini Combo** Toward Toward ■, hold Toward and tap ■ 4 times, then hit ▲.

**18 Hit** Toward, Toward, ▲, ●, X, ■, ▲, ●.

**16 Hit** Toward, Toward, ▲, ●, ■, X.

**16 Hit** Toward, Toward, ●, ▲, X, ■.

**16 Hit** Toward, Toward, ●, ▲, X, ■, ▲.

#### RAZOR RAMON

##### Moves:

**Quick Slice** Down, Down Toward, Toward, ■.

**Dashing Slice** Hold ■ for three seconds then release it.

**Quad Slam** Toward Toward, X. Tap X up to 4 times. You don't have to grab.

##### Grabs:

**Razors Edge** Toward, Toward, ▲.

**Slam** Down, Down, ●.

**Uppercut** Down, Down, ▲.

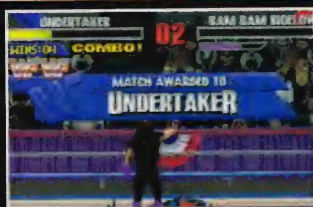
##### Combos:

**Links** (grab) Up + ■ or (grab) Down + ■.

**Initiators** ▲, X.

**Mini Combo** Hold Down and press ■ 5 times, then press ▲.

**24 Hit** Toward Toward, ▲, ■, X, ●, ▲.



#### UNDERTAKER

##### Moves:

**Neck Choke** Down, Down Toward, Toward, ■.

**Neck Breaker** Hold ■ for three seconds then release it.

**Shadow Neckbreaker** Hold ■, run at opponent & release ▲ when near.

**Tombstone Smash** Toward Toward, ●. Press X repeatedly to get up to four hits.

##### Grabs:

**Uppercut** Down, Down, ▲.

**Mystic Glove** Down, Down, ●.

**Neck Twist** Toward Toward, ▲.

**Shadow Slam** Down, Down, X.

Press ■ repeatedly for up to four hits.

**Fiery Mystic Glove** (neck choke) then press Down + ●.

##### Combos:

**Links** (grab) Toward + ■.

**Initiators** X, ●. **Mini Combo** Hold Toward and tap ■ 5 times then press Down + ●.

**21 Hit** Toward Toward ●, X, ■, ▲, ●.



#### YOKOZUNA

##### Moves:

**Quick Jabs** Down, Down Toward, Toward, ■.

**Salt Throw** Hold ■ for three seconds then release.

**Belly Rush** Toward, Toward, ■.

**Head Knocker** ■ (when close)

**Body Slam** Toward, Toward, ● (when close)

##### Grabs:

**Power Grab** ▲ + ●.

**Leg Spin Throw** (power grab) Down + ●.

**Body Slam** Toward Toward ▲.

**Piledriver** Down Down ●.

**Salt Throw** Down Down Toward Toward ■.

##### Combos:

**Initiators** ■, ▲.

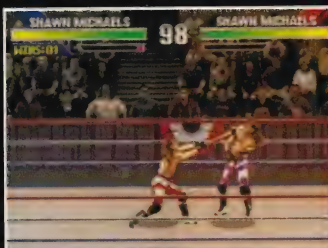
**Mini Combo** Hold Toward and tap ■.

**14 Hit** Toward Toward

▲, ■, ●, X, ■, ▲.

**13 Hit** Toward Toward

■, ▲, ●, X, ■, ▲.



#### SHAWN MICHAELS

##### Moves:

**Flying Snap Kick** Away Away ●.

**Back Suplex** Hold ■ for three seconds then release.

**Flying Drop Kick** Charge ● for three seconds then release.

**Frankensteiner** Toward Toward

●. **Sliding Kick Toss** Toward Toward X.

**Sunset flip** Toward Toward ▲.

**Quad Speed Kick** Press Away Down Toward X. Press X repeatedly for four hits.

**Quad Stomp** Run, and press X repeatedly next to opponent.

##### Grabs:

**Face Smash** Toward Toward ●. Press ● repeatedly for up to four hits.

**Arm Breaker** Toward Toward ■.

**Back Suplex** Down Down ●.

**Slam** Toward Toward ▲.

**Kick Toss** Toward Toward X.

##### Combos:

**Links** (grab) Toward + ● or (grab) Toward + X.

**Initiators** ■, X.

**Mini Combo** (grab) Hold Toward, press ▲ 5 times.

**20 Hit** Toward Toward X, ●, ▲, ■, L1.

**17 Hit** Toward Toward ■, ▲, ●, X, L1.

#### BAM BAM BIGELOW

##### Moves:

**Fiery Fists** Hold ■ for three seconds then release.

**Throw** Hold ▲ for three seconds then release.

**Fire Throw** Hold ▲, run at opponent and release ▲.

**Flying Kick** Away Away ●.

## WWF WRESTLEMANIA

### Grabs:

**Power Grab** ▲ + ●.

**Piledriver** Down Down ●. Press ▲ repeatedly for up to four hits. **Backbreaker** (power grab) then press Down + ●.

### Combo:

**Links** (grab) Toward + ●.

**Initiator** ■, ▲.

**Mini Combo** Hold Toward, and tap ● 4 times then tap ▲ once, then press Down Down ●.

**19 Hit** Toward Toward

■, ▲, ●, X, ■.

**20 Hit** Toward Toward

▲, ■, X, ●, ▲.

**22 Hit** Toward Toward

■, ▲, X, ●, ▲.

#### BRETT HART

##### Moves:

**Rolling Uppercut** Down Down Toward Toward ▲.

**Eye Raker** Down Down Toward Toward ■.

**SharpShooter** Hit ▲ next to fall-en opponents feet.

**Dashing U/cut** Down Down ■.

**Lunging Kick** Away Away ●.

Down Down ▲ Run and press ▲.

### Grabs:

**Face Slam** Away Down Toward ■. Press ■ repeatedly for up to 4 hits.

**Backbreaker** Down Down ●.

**Slam** Toward Toward ▲.

### Combos:

**Links** (grab) Toward + ■ or (grab) Toward + X.

**Initiators** ■, ●.

**Mini Combo** (grab) hold Toward and tap ■ 5 times, then press ●.

**16 Hit** Toward Toward

●, ▲, ■, X, ●.

**13 Hit** Toward Toward

■, ▲, ■, X, ●.



#### LEX LUGER

##### Moves:

**Fist Smash** Hold ■ for three seconds then release it.

**Fun Flail** Toward Toward ●.

Press X repeatedly for up to four hits.

**Elbow Girder** Toward Toward ■.

### Grabs:

**Power Grab** ▲, ●.

**Suplex** Toward Toward ▲.

**Throw** Down Down ●.

**Backbreaker** (power grab) then press Up + ●.

### Combos:

**Initiators** ●, X.

**Mini Combo** (grab) hold Toward, ● X 4 times, then press ▲ once.

**17 Hit** Toward Toward

X, ●, ▲, ■, ●.

**19 Hit** Toward Toward

●, X, ■, ▲, ●, L1.



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# Discworld

**O**kay, we've done the first two levels, so here's your chance to get through the final two with a degree more ease than you thought possible. Just don't trust that Dragon...



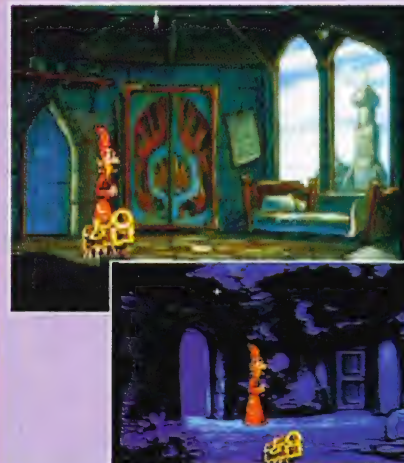
## B IF YOU WANT TO BE A HERO...

Act Three begins back in the Market Square, where some changes have taken place. Because the Brotherhood are now creators of aphrodisiac custard, the alchemists have gone into the movie business and the Psychiatrist has become an agent. Both the milkmaid and the troll are queuing up to become the stars of *Gentlemen Prefer Trolls*. There are a great many other changes and everywhere is worth exploring to acclimatise yourself with the changes. The next thing is that it becomes your task to stop the Dragon. The Townsfolk seem to need a hero and one by one, you learn what the necessary attributes are. Guess who is going to be their saviour? All you need are: a talisman, a moustache, a birthmark, a magic spell, camouflage and a magic sword.

To find a sword that goes 'Ting', you need to visit the Fool, being tortured beneath the Palace. You realise that the Fool doesn't have a sword so it must be his talking doll, Chucky. Chucky needs to be stretched on a rack, so you have to find a lever in the Lovers' Wood and then go back and stretch him. The sword is located in a most painful area and you must take it to be tuned by the dwarfs living near the mines outside the city. The dwarf you deal with wants a drink, but you have to find a way into the Broken Drum's cellar – the bogeyman could be useful here. Once you've got what you need, return to the Dwarves and you'll get the sword tuned.

## A THE END OF ACT TWO

By now you have got hold of all six golden objects from the Brotherhood. All you have to do is give them to the Dragon and he tells you to take another trip to the Market Square and get Nanny Ogg's Custard Book from her (a quick kiss makes a good diversion). Whizz back through L-Space and steal the Dragon Summoning book before the Thief did (does – this gets very confusing). Exchange the book covers so that he steals the Custard Book and, along with the rest of the Brotherhood will have fun making anything except Dragon Summoning spells.



## C HOW TO GET A MOUSTACHE

To get the moustache you need to get the donkey out of the stable. To do this, you need to prove it was responsible for whatever incident keeps causing people to ask 'Did you get the number of that Donkey Cart?' You'll need to find that number, buried beneath caked-on mud on the cart. Use your memory of where to find things that might be useful for cleaning said number plate. When you've got the number, track down the dazed assassin and tell him where the donkey is. When he's had the donkey arrested, you visit the poor animal in the stocks and using hair from his tail, make yourself a lovely moustache. Now, you must get the Birthmark.





## D HOW TO GET THE BIRTHMARK

To get the birthmark, go in the palace-dungeons and fetch a bone from a skeleton. Coat the bone with glue from the toy shop. Next visit the inn and give the voice-throwing dog the glued bone and talk to the Sailor about his tattoo. He'll only help you if you find Polly, his parrot. He'll give you a parrot whistle and you must go to the edge of the world (via a discourse with a dwarf and the Gods) to find the parrot playing with the seagulls. A bit of lateral thinking will help you entice her further (this is why you needed to see the dwarf). Use the butterfly net to get her. You'll need an extension which will involve getting your broom back from old Windle Poon the wizard, but this may prove difficult. If so, take a look at the eggs in the Market Square, pick up some starch from the University, and using very devious means you ought to be able to convince Windle Poon to give you your broom back. Once you've rescued Polly, you lose your parrot whistle (which you will need) so try to find a way of retrieving it. A helpful hint would be a magicians hat found in the Arch Chancellor's room.

Once you have both Polly and the whistle go back to the Sailor and he points you in the direction of the Barber, who doubles as a tattooist. But he, sadly is still waiting in the wood for his true love, the Milkmaid. And she, of course, is waiting

to be a film star. So go to her, get her autograph on the Barber's appointment book. Take this to him and he'll go rushing back to his shop. Meet him there in out of gratitude, he'll give you a free tattoo. However, this will be painful and so perhaps you'd be better off finding a transfer-style tattoo from the Street Urchin. He, however, won't part with it, although he does give you hints on how to steal it from him. Having done this (which involves a return visit to the Thief's hovel, a climb up the church spire and a frightening bungee jump), your latest quest is over. Now all you need is the magic spell, some camouflage and the magic talisman.



## E HOW TO GET THE MAGIC SPELL

To get the magic spell you must go back in the Unseen University library. It will be hard to locate but just think about where you met the slimy salesman earlier. Around there you will find a magic book which, unfortunately, is apparently indecipherable. However, press ENTER on the page and all will be revealed. Next, you need some kind of camouflage. Go to the University kitchens and steal a spatula from the kitchen and walk back to the shades. There use the spatula on the wall where the transvestite Stonemason was working. Use the spatula to scrape off some soot and bingo – you now have the perfect camouflage.



## F HOW TO GET THE TALISMAN

Go to the pub, the alchemist, Nanny Ogg and the palace dungeons and before long you should have enough materials to help you on your journey. These include a camera, an imp, a worm that pretends to be a rat but which is really something else, some truth potion and an award-winning sheep.

You'll also need to pay a visit to the Dragon Sanctuary and get a picture frame from the Fishmonger's octopus. Now talk with Braggart in the Broken Drum (be sure to mix his beer with the truth potion) and now should know explain how to find the Temple of Offler, where you can locate the Eye of Offler, your Talisman. However, you now have to contend with the Monk (clues as to how have been given earlier in the game – specifically think about carpets) and push him into the water. What follows is a clear *Raiders of the Lost Ark* pastiche as you guide a blindfolded Rincewind through to his target, switching a bag of sand for the Eye.

Leave the mine and find yourself in the Market Square, ready to fight the Dragon. Good luck...

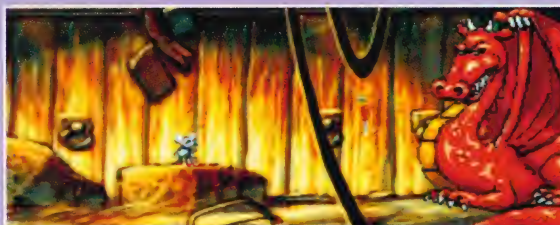


## G ACT FOUR: HOW TO DEFEAT THE DRAGON

You need to get a key from Lady Ramkin, find a dragon called Mambo, and then get into the Palace dungeons to load him up with ammo – coal. Now feed him with the contents of a white hot cauldron and then take him to the dwarves' mine to find a grate. Now you have an apparently powerful weapon with which to defeat the Dragon.

However, back in the Market Square, with everyone looking on, this might not go exactly to plan. So there's just one thing left to do – think about Nanny Ogg and everything you have done before involving her and you have the answer.

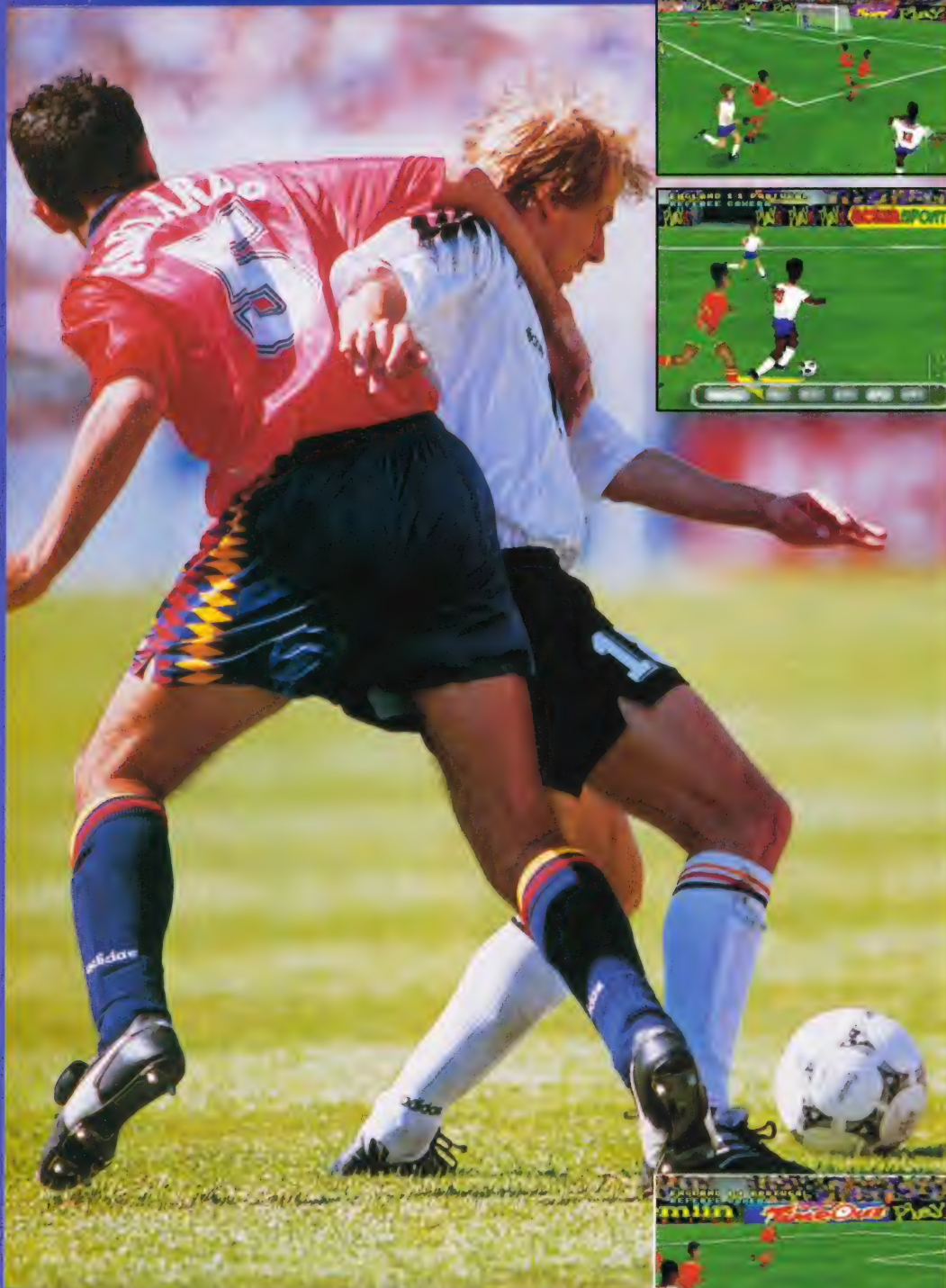
Once the game is over, everyone will live happily ever after and Rincewind will be considered a mighty wizard.





# ACTUA SOCCER

**E**ngland right-hand man Don Howe once said 'There are four things that will make you a better footballer; practice, practice, practice and more practice.' But Don Howe's a boring, talentless git who thinks a Homburg hat looks rather stylish. Therefore, Gremlin have put together a guide to getting the most out of *Actua Soccer* without all the hard work.



## GET IN THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND

● *Actua Soccer* isn't some naff arcade game with minimal controls. You can't just keep pressing the assorted fascia buttons until the ball flies in to the back of the net, courtesy of a kick Cantona would be proud of. You have to develop that most elu-

sive of attributes — a footballer's brain. How else will you know how to create space, when to hold on to the ball, when to release and when to give their winger a grass sandwich. To help you here are a few points to bear in mind.

## SHOOTING

● An advantage of the one touch feature is that it allows strikers to perform 'first time' crosses from the wing. These are possibly the most satisfying and spectacular ways to score. You too can play like Brazil — follow this step-by-step guide:

- 1 Select a formation that has players on the wing (4-4-2, 4-3-3 etc...)
- 2 When pushing forward, play the ball out to the wing.
- 3 Run with the ball to the side of the penalty area until the symbol at your player's feet turns to a square.
- 4 Twist and turn in a Ginola-esque manner until you lose your marker.
- 5 If the square is still at your feet, press the pass button once. This should send the ball floating invitingly into the box.
- 6 As soon as your cross is released press the shoot button once. This will set up the striker's first time shot.
- 7 Sit back and watch the striker volley, head or scissor-kick the ball right into the back of the net.

● One touch shots are very difficult to perform from short passes. Therefore only attempt them when you have the time to set the shot up.

● Try and shoot with the one touch feature when you can. These give the goalkeeper less time to get into position and the shots are automatically targetted on goal.

● If you have enough space, attempt the super shot (with joypad centred).

● Always be on the look out for rebounds from their keeper. The best time to score is when the goalie's still on the ground, recovering from the last shot.

● Always try to put aftertouch on a shot if you can. With the best keepers aftertouch really is the only way to score from long distance.

● When taking a penalty, select the "wire" camera. Aim your player at a corner of the goal and use the power shot. Then quickly press down on the joypad to keep the ball hard and low.

● Just don't panic! The best players stay cool when the ball's in the area.





## ONE TOUCH FOOTBALL

Mastering this technique is vital to success in *Actua Soccer*. Listed below are all the possible combinations and moves:

**First time touch:** This can be performed when the symbol at the players feet is a star. Hold in the X button, without touching the direction controls. When this button is released the player will shoot at goal.

**First time control:** When the symbol at the players feet is flashing, press the pass button. The symbol will stop flashing. The player will then be in control of the ball.

**Chip shot:** Hold the ■ and the X button down and then release the ■ button to chip the ball forward. The power of the chip is determined by the length of time the button is held down.

**Power shot:** Press the ■ button when the player is standing completely still.

**Dummy pass:** This can only be performed when the player is standing still. Hold the X button, select a direction and then release the X button.

**Disguised pass:** Hold the ■ and X buttons, select a direction and then release the square button. This will look like a dummy pass, but will be passed to a team mate who must then shoot or punt the ball up-field.

**High pass:** Hold the ■ and X buttons. Release the X button to make a high pass.

**Power pass:** Pressing the X button will pass the ball along the ground. The power of this pass is determined by the length of time that the button is held down. The direction pad can be used to control the direction of the pass.



## PASSING

- The key to successful passing is creating space. Don't be tempted to pass when an opposition player is right on top of you. Either release the ball quickly, or twist and turn until you're clear

- Aim for the gaps, and look for players in space. Remember that you don't always have to be facing the player you want to pass to, but if you aren't then the pass is less likely to be successful. If your team have good vision they will look to pass to the man in the best position. They will also run on to the ball when it is passed towards them.

- A passing game is most effective if you're playing with one of the better teams. Italy's players, for example, will be more likely to find a man in space and players off the ball will make runs that get them clear of defenders. If you're playing one of the weaker teams a high number of passes will increase your chances of losing possession. In this situation it's better to revert to a long ball game and choose a suitable formation (eg. 4-2-4)

## PRACTICE

- Frankly, to be able to play football well, you've got to do some training. To enable you to do this, select practice mode and you'll be able to master your technique without the other team bothering you.

- You must concentrate on practicing the one touch passing and shooting moves

- If you're having all the possession, but aren't scoring many goals, then this is the part of the game you particularly need to work on.

## DEFENDING

- Keep the opposition's shooting opportunities to an absolute minimum. Live by the maxim 'If in doubt, boot it out'. You may feel like a bit of a donkey, but then Tony Adams earns a fortune so who are we to argue?

- Look out for rebounds from the keeper. Opposing teams will always maintain an attack until the ball is safely in the keeper's hands.

- Turn on the offside option. This means that your defenders will always stand a chance of blocking a run on goal. It also means that your strikers won't find it as easy to go one on one with the keeper.

- Don't leave yourself exposed at the back. If you're playing a much better team or one with an attack formation, you'll need to select a formation that has a four or five man defence. Don't forget the option of passing back to the keeper. If there's enough space he'll boot it so far it'll come down with snow on it.

## TACKLING

- Try not to pull players out of position to make a tackle, especially in the penalty area. If you do you may be leaving an opposing player unmarked. A better tactic is to hold your ground and stay between the striker and the goal.

- Don't lunge at every player feet first. Sliding tackles should be used only when you're sure of coming away with the ball or as a last resort.

- The most successful approach is to run into a player (use the sprint button to help you make up ground), shouldering him off the ball.

- Be aware of which referee is in charge of the game. One too many tackles with a strict ref and it's time for an early bath.

## FORMATION AND TACTICS

- Know your squad and the strengths and weakness of the opposition. Plan your game accordingly. For example, if you're playing a weak team against Germany, play with a packed defence, stick to a long-ball game and use forwards with good controlling skills rather than those with good pace or flair.

- A lot of problems can be sorted out by getting the formation right. For example, if you're losing out in midfield, try adopting a 4-4-2 or 4-5-1 formation. Remember that the default formation may not be the one that exactly suits your style of play.

## ...AND IF YOU CAN'T WIN FAIRLY, CHEAT!

- On the title screen press: R2, L2, Select, Up, Left - at the same time.

- This allows you to play with a choose a secret dream team (the Gremlin Showbiz XI). Among their ranks is a highly rated no.11 called Bazza Davies. For some reason the commentator thinks he's great.

## TEAM RANKINGS

In ARCADE mode the relative abilities of the teams were based on actual Fifa rankings. So to help you know your Ghana from your Bolivia here's the full list.

1. Brazil
2. Spain
3. Sweden
4. Italy
5. Germany
6. Netherlands
7. Switzerland
8. Norway
9. Republic of Ireland
10. Argentina
11. Romania
12. Nigeria
13. Russia
14. Denmark
15. Mexico
16. Bulgaria
17. Colombia
18. England
19. France
20. Portugal
21. Zambia
22. Egypt
23. USA
24. Belgium
25. Ivory Coast
26. Ghana
27. Saudi Arabia
28. Greece
29. Poland
30. Tunisia
31. Cameroon
32. Scotland
33. Morocco
34. Czech Republic
35. South Korea
36. Japan
37. Uruguay
38. Finland
39. Iceland
40. China
41. Wales
42. Israel
43. Slovakia
44. Bolivia
45. Northern Ireland

Alternatively, if you play the game in simulation mode each individual player will have his own ability levels. Therefore, each team will only be as good as the players selected for each match. In this mode the best teams are Italy, Brazil and Germany.

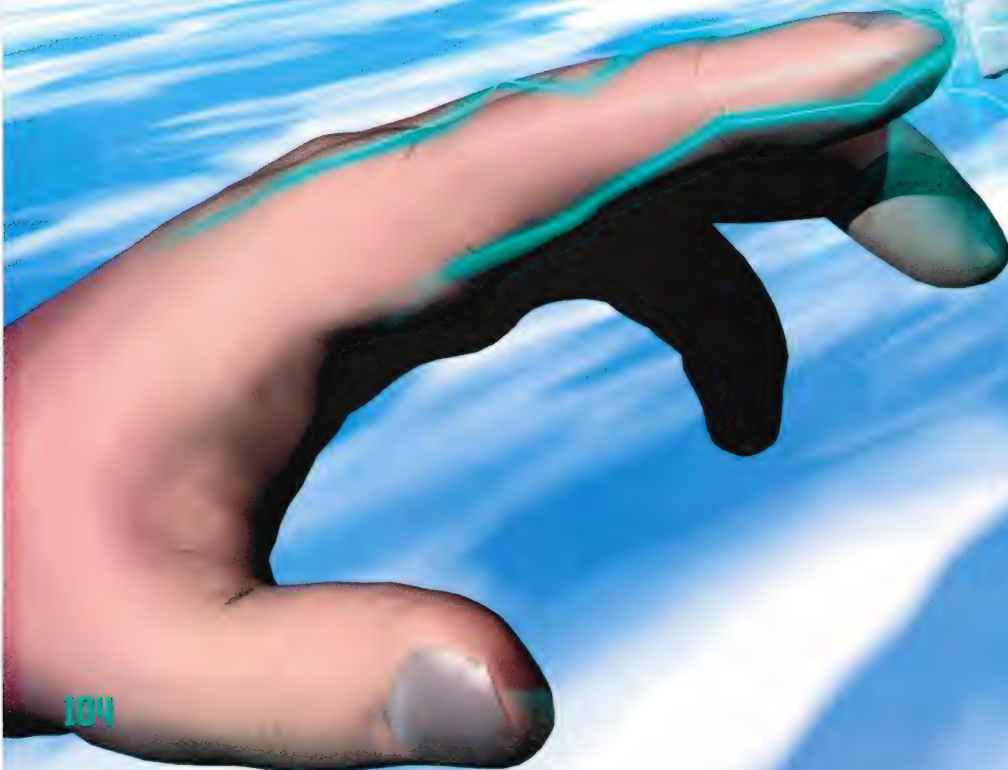




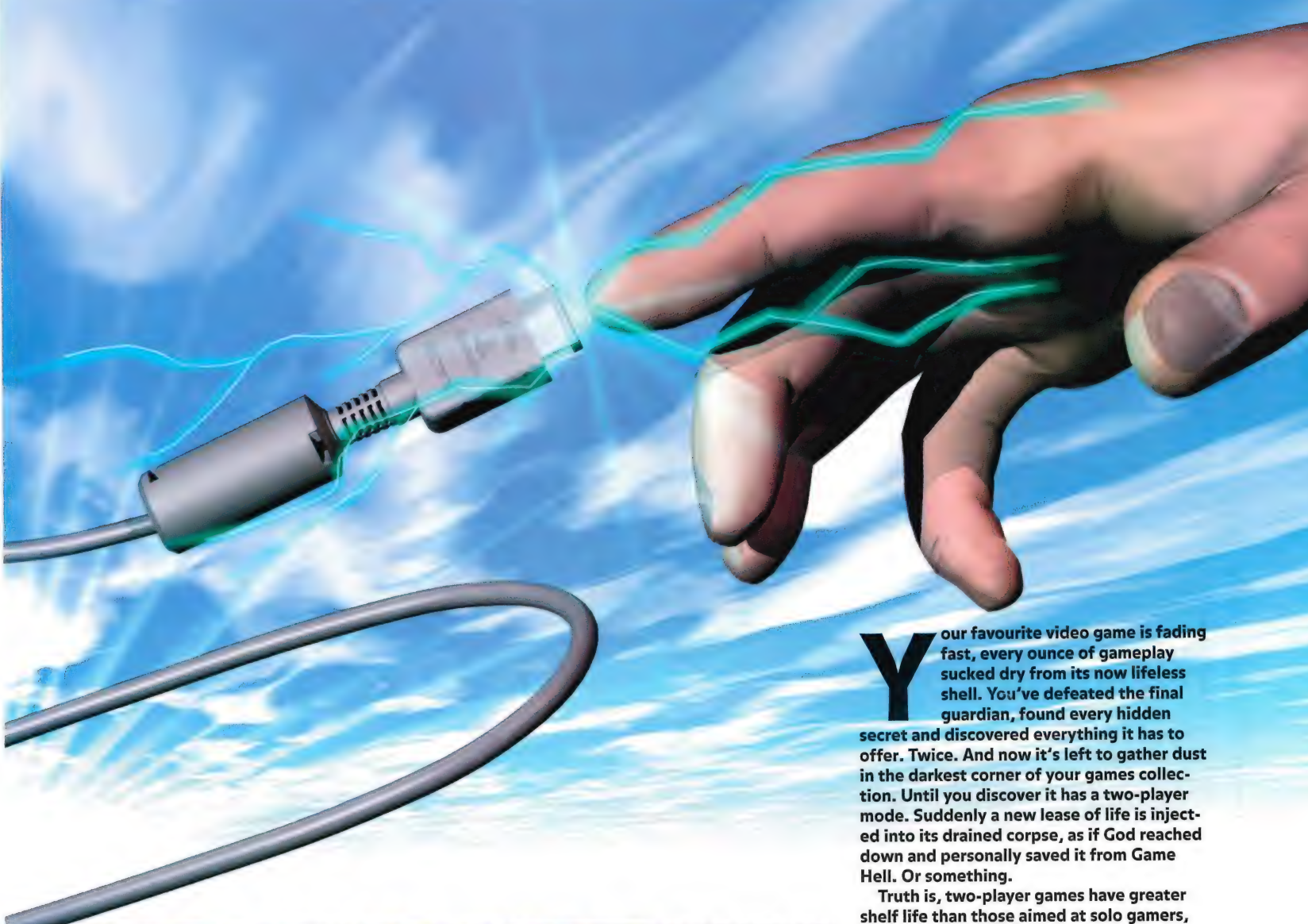
# PlayStation to the Power<sub>of</sub> 2

*Birds do it, bees do it, even educated fleas do it. It's human nature to mingle with other people, but video gaming has long been regarded as a pastime enjoyed primarily by lonely saddoes.*

*PlayStation Plus rewrites the history books as we investigate the growing phenomena that is multi-player gaming.*







**Y**our favourite video game is fading fast, every ounce of gameplay sucked dry from its now lifeless shell. You've defeated the final guardian, found every hidden secret and discovered everything it has to offer. Twice. And now it's left to gather dust in the darkest corner of your games collection. Until you discover it has a two-player mode. Suddenly a new lease of life is injected into its drained corpse, as if God reached down and personally saved it from Game Hell. Or something.

Truth is, two-player games have greater shelf life than those aimed at solo gamers, and it's a hell of a lot more enjoyable competing against an intelligent (well, hopefully) human opponent rather than a predictable computer-controlled enemy. Looking back through video game history multi-player games have always been tremendously popular, from the bat-and-ball simplicity of *Pong* to the excitement of five-player *Bomberman*.

After just six months the PlayStation has been swamped by multi-player games, from beat 'em ups such as *Tekken* which boasts simultaneous fist-fighting, to *WipeOut*'s brilliant serial link. Now that Sony has finally released the multitap even more developers are jumping on the multi-player bandwagon, squeezing in cable link, split-screen and multitap options wherever possible. Some genuinely add to a game's longevity but others are little more than afterthoughts, offering nothing over the one-player game. In the world of multi-player games it most definitely takes two to tango so with cable link and multitap in hand, we venture into the world of serial killing...







## GLOSSARY

So what is a serial link? If you're unfamiliar with the terminology used in multi-player gaming it can get a little confusing. A lot of games offer a simultaneous two-player option, a prime example of which being just about any beat 'em up you care to mention. A game offering multitap play can usually be enjoyed by up to four people, with each joypad plugged into the junction box that is Sony's Multitap. Serial link is a bit more complex, with two PlayStations linked together using a cable that plugs into the serial I/O port on the back of the machine. Of course, two copies of the game and two televisions are also needed to play serial link. To clarify what options each game boasts, simply refer to the following icons.

### SPLIT-SCREEN



### CABLE-LINK



### MULTITAP



## DESCENT

**2** Descent is PC title that has been converted across to the PlayStation, and while it doesn't have the eight-way network facility of its parent, it does boast an excellent two-player game. Unlike *Doom*, *Descent* doesn't offer cooperative play, just loads of weapon-packed levels to nuke your opponent. There are three missions to choose from, from *Descent*'s first strike to the more exciting PlayStation Chaos scenario, and each of these missions contains a number of individual levels over which the battle is fought. Due to the nature of *Descent*'s gameplay, it is more difficult to play than *Doom*, and getting used to weaving through tunnels stretching in every direction takes time. However, it literally adds another dimension to Deathmatch as not only can you hide around corners, you can lurk in the darkness above or below the enemy! The reactor hidden within each level adds tension too, as players can win the match by destroying the generator and escaping before

## WIPEOUT

**2**

If there's one company paving the way for serial link multi-player games it's

Psygnosis. Of its eight or so PlayStation titles already available over half boast multi-player options of some description, with *WipeOut* being the first game on the PlayStation to feature the two-player cable link. Surprisingly it's also one of the best, the serial link being perfectly suited to the high-speed thrills and spills of anti-gravity racing. The two-player game allows drivers (or should it be pilots?) to compete across any of the eight circuits, flying any of the craft in either a head-to-head competition or a full race complete with other computer-controlled racers. With two players of equal ability *WipeOut* is extremely good fun, using the various power-ups and weapons to snatch the chequered flag from beneath your opponent's hov-unit. Better still you won't race for hours without seeing another driver as the CPU skimmers are just as competitive (if sometimes not quite as intelligent) as any human-controlled car. As *WipeOut* isn't the easiest of games to pick up, playing against a human competitor also allows gamers to familiarise themselves with the tracks before tackling a full-blown race. Link-up *WipeOut* is rather good, then. Certainly, it ranks alongside kinky sex with the partner(s) of your dreams for sheer enjoyment.

★★★★★



the enemy can find the exit. But because *Descent* is more complex than *Doom*, it isn't as immediately playable. *Doom* may be the undisputed king of cable link, but *Descent* makes a rather attractive queen.

★★★★★




**STICK TO THE SMALL EARLY LEVELS** OTHERWISE YOU'LL SPEND MOST OF THE TIME LOOKING FOR EACH OTHER RATHER THAN FIGHTING.

**DEATHMATCH DESCENT** IS ALMOST AS EXCITING AS *DOOM*, THANKS TO THE EXTRA DIMENSION GIVEN FROM FLYING A SPACESHIP.




## KRAZY IVAN

**2**  Psynosis' robo-blaster looks cool but is less than well hung in the gameplay department. With a little practice each battle mech can be defeated in much the same way, stepping to the side to avoid incoming fire and locking on with missiles and guns. The same technique can be used in two-player link-up, so when both players side-step furiously the game becomes a bit tedious. Even worse is the lack of multi-play options. Gamers cannot choose which robots to control and are automatically dumped inside the Black Knight combat droid, fighting over a solitary battle zone with very few exciting features – a couple of trees, the odd hill and that's about it. *Krazy Ivan* is disappointingly slow too. Screen update remains smooth but combat is a far cry from the frantic adrenaline rush given by *Doom*, *Krazy Ivan* being more sedate, even relaxed at times. Zzz...

In an ideal world a two-player option should offer another dimension to a game, but *Krazy Ivan*'s link facility is little more than an afterthought. A greater choice of robots and possibly even combat arenas would have helped longevity considerably, but as it stands *Krazy Ivan* is a complete waste of the link-up cable.



## ASSAULT RIGS

**2**  Link-up *Assault Rigs* is almost like a 3D version of the archaic Atari VCS game, *Combat*. Two tanks trundle around a selection of texture-mapped mazes, nuking each other with any weaponry that comes to hand. It's as simple as that. Almost. *Assault Rigs* is crammed with various options to make the game more exciting, with 12 tanks to choose between (from futuristic metal beasts to old-fashioned armoured cars from World War I) and around twenty battle arenas. Naturally there's are tons of weapons to grab, as well as the added threat of computer-controlled enemies that attack anything that wheels into view. Best of all, there are two cable-link game modes. Rig Rumble is a no-messing all-out war, where the objective of the game is to simply defeat the other player. Gem Warz is a bit more structured, with both tanks collecting as many power jewels as possible and then exiting the level before the other player manages to escape. As with the best two-player games, *Assault Rigs* is easy to play yet extremely enjoyable. It may take a little time to master the controls and different camera views packed into the game, but having done this *Assault Rigs* is fast-paced, exciting and highly explosive. Cool.



## RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION

**2**  Although *Ridge Racer Revolution* is still not available officially, when the game is released in the UK during the summer it will feature a link-up option. The game itself is a natural progression from the original *Ridge Racer*, with a selection of new cars and more tracks (well, one more track) to race on. Of course, providing you've accessed the hidden circuits and cars (by completing the time trials and championship races) you can compete on any of the six track variants driving any of the 15 cars, including the awesome White Angel. As *Ridge Racer Revolution* is one of the best PlayStation racing games available (although a bit of a con if you've already splashed out for the first game), it comes as no surprise that it's a damn fine link-up game. It's more immediate than *WipeOut* and is as close to arcade racing as you'll get on a home console, with virtually no noticeable reduction in speed or screen update compared to the one-player game. Admittedly it doesn't have the weapons

of *WipeOut* or the ramming of *Destruction Derby*, but for straightforward racing you won't get any better.



**RIDGE RACER REVOLUTION** IS AN EXCELLENT TWO-PLAYER GAME, AND ONE WHICH IS MORE IMMEDIATELY PLAYABLE THAN *WIPEOUT*. UNFORTUNATELY, THOUGH, THERE ARE ONLY TWO COURSES.





## DESTRUCTION DERBY

20

Dull, dreary, drab. Multi-player link-up maybe be the pinnacle of PlayStation gaming but *Destruction Derby* is the one exception to the rule. Sure, it may be great fun shunting your best mate into the crash barrier in the normal race mode, but linking up for a bit of arena bowl destruction is bland, frustrating and downright pointless. It's comparable to two Mini Metros driving blind around a Sainsbury's car park – the chances of actually hitting one another are slim so most of the collisions are little more than a scratch on the paint work or, if you're lucky, a broken wing mirror. Yawn. Introducing the CPU cars spices up the action a bit, but with 18 other vehicles tussling for pole position the element of competing against another human is lost.

*Destruction Derby* isn't without its moments though, and one of the most enjoyable multi-player options is the Tag mode. As the race begins both

cars are targeted by nine computer driven vehicles, hell bent on stock car carnage. The pursuing CPU cars' attention can be diverted onto the other human player by smashing into their car, resulting in an 18-car chase as the lone Ford Cortina desperately

tries to avoid collisions from every direction. Of course, they can escape by 'tagging' the other car by ramming into them, but the clock (and a load of psycho drivers) are against them.

Regrettably link-up *Destruction Derby* isn't as much fun as *Wipe-Out* or *The Need for Speed*, both of which offer fast, competitive one-on-one human competition.

★★★★☆

## THE NEED FOR SPEED

20

We were less than enamoured with *The Need for Speed* in Issue 7 (rated 70%), and felt it lacked the pace offered by the likes of *Ridge Racer* and its link-up sequel. To EA's credit, though, the game features a duo of two-player mode – with a split-screen mode, and the far more preferable link-up between two machines. While the former is enjoyable enough (although the horizon is obviously reduced to allow for the smaller play area), the link mode adds to the game beyond belief. A road map details the positions of the two cars in respect to each other, and the tracks can be raced either as open roads or with other vehicles lining the route. The latter is by far the most enjoyable, and adds real skill to the proceedings – also ensuring that the gap between the two racers never grows insurmountable. One of the best examples of a link-up yet, but it only goes to show how limited *The Need for Speed* is when played as a one-player game.



THE NEED FOR SPEED'S LINK-UP OPTION MAKES THE GAME CONSIDERABLY MORE ENJOYABLE BUT IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE CABLE, TRY THE SPLIT-SCREEN MODE.



★★★★☆

## DOOM

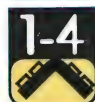
20

Deathmatch *Doom* is the piece de resistance of PlayStation gaming. Forget everything else, fragging the ass of your best mate, partner or grandmother is the most fun you can have with a pair of PlayStation and a link-up cable. As with the one-player game, the scenario is pretty straightforward: run around, shoot, run a bit bit more, shoot again...

Two players can either join forces to fight Satan's hellspawn as a team, or alternatively fight it out mano-et-mano across any of the 59 levels in Deathmatch. Cooperative mode is basically the same as the one-player game, but with two gung-ho humans charging around. Levels are completed as usual, the same monsties appear and the all weapons are located in pretty much the same place. You do, however, get the chance to frag your buddy's ass...



## STRIKER '96



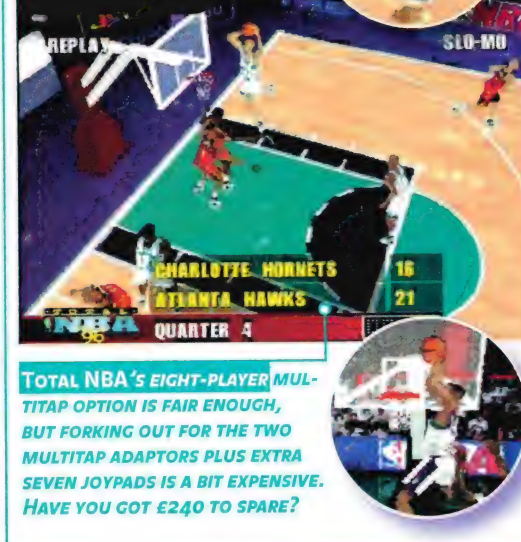
**1-4** *Striker '96* was the first soccer game to officially appear in the UK and now, with *FIFA*, *Actua Soccer* and *Adidas Power Soccer* gracing the shelves, it's looks awfully... well, just awful really. It terms of presentation its admirable, with a neat selection of camera angles and smooth character animation, but it's let down by simplistic gameplay. While *Actua Soccer* et al allow players to string together decent set-pieces and crosses, *Striker '96* relies too heavily on whacking the ball up-field and scoring by shooting diagonally at the goal. The situation doesn't improve with four people either, and while passing the ball between human players is easy enough, scoring a header from a cross or executing other impressive moves is downright impossible. More annoying is Andy Gray's running commentary, which is limited to no more than a dozen or so stereotypical comments like "och, that's not the best tackle I've ever seen". *Striker's* in-door pitch is good though, but still not enough to warrant buying the game and a multitap plus joypads.



## TOTAL NBA



**1-8** Sony showcase the multitap with *Total NBA*, its in-house basketball game that can be played by up to eight players simultaneously. How? With two multitaps, each connected to the PlayStation and four joypads. As you can imagine the result is hugely enjoyable, with eight gamers cramped around a television all gagging for a piece of slam-dunk action. The teams can be divided equally, with four players on each, or any combination if there are less players (two on one side and three on the other if five people are playing, and so on). Naturally, with eight human players running around the court things tends to get a little confusing, making the game difficult to follow and your player even harder. It's expensive, too. The majority of gamers only have two pads, so before you can play eight-way *Total NBA* you'll need to spend £60 on a couple of multi taps plus a further £150 on joypads! Extortionate? I think so.



**TOTAL NBA'S EIGHT-PLAYER MULTITAP OPTION IS FAIR ENOUGH, BUT FORKING OUT FOR THE TWO MULTITAP ADAPTORS PLUS EXTRA SEVEN JOYPADS IS A BIT EXPENSIVE. HAVE YOU GOT £240 TO SPARE?**

## NBA JAM TE



**1-4** Compared to the recent spate of hyper-realistic basketball simulations like *Total NBA* and Konami's *In the Zone*, *NBA Jam Tournament Edition* is looking painfully dated. It's a near-perfect conversion of the Midway coin-op, offering two-on-two basketball rather true-to-life court action. With its almost cartoon-like presentation (the players have oversized heads attached to gangly bodies) *NBA Jam TE* is easier to follow than *Total NBA*, mainly because there are only four players on the court at once. Using the multitap, each can be controlled by a human, or alternatively two-player can compete against a computer-controlled team. Admittedly its not the best use of the multitap or even the most realistic game available, but its good fun for up to four players nonetheless.



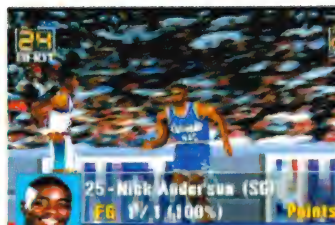
...Which is the whole point of *Deathmatch*. Each level doubles as an arena of death, complete with stacks of weapons, ammo and health top-ups which constantly regenerate. Get ready for a never-ending killing spree then, as blood is spilt by the gallon and each stage is left resembling an abutter floor after a particularly busy week of cow-slaughtering. It's extremely gory, yes, and some will probably find the blood and guts offensive. But bollocks, *Deathmatch Doom* is reigns supreme and if I could I'd have its children...



**WIMPS SCARED OF VIOLENCE CAN OPT TO PLAY CO-OPERATIVE DOOM RATHER THAN DEATHMATCH, TAKING ON SATAN'S HELLSPAWN AS TEAM. BOO.**







## NBA IN THE ZONE

**1-4** Konami's basketball sim follows the trend of multitap gaming by including an option for up to four players on court simultaneously. Like the other basketball games, players can be assigned to either team, ganging up on the computer or siding with one another. It works well too and, thanks to *In the*

*Zone's* big, brash graphics, 'active' players aren't lost in a mass of gangly arms and legs. Stringing together moves is pretty easy too, and with some practice it's not hard to line up slam dunks and other cool lay-ups. One of the best multi-player basketball games on the PlayStation.

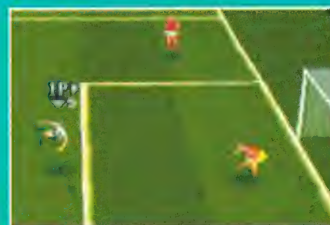


## ADIDAS POWER SOCCER



**1-4** Firmly ensconced as the finest footy game to date, *Adidas Power Soccer* also benefits from compatibility with the Sony multi-tap unit. On selecting a pair of teams, the four entrants are duly split into two-a-side, with the CPU switching control to the player sprites in the most advantageous positions. Usually, four-player soccer games become bogged down with people muttering about being unsure which player is theirs, while control invariably switches to the goalkeeper when neither person is expecting it. *Adidas Power Soccer* avoids all these pitfalls and, following some initial difficulty, it actually becomes easier to position players for volleys from crosses than when playing alone.

*Adidas Power Soccer* also offers the users a league system where up to 32 teams can compete against each other for league or cup supremacy. This way, the multi-tap device is used to designate a chosen



team to each entrant, and the matches are then played as the teams are drawn. This also allows for one of better side-effects of the Multi-tap — the abusive banter that invariably comes when a few people start

## FIGHT!

The most prominent genre to allow two players to compete against each other is the beat 'em up. Ever since Melbourne House unveiled *Way of the Exploding Fist* for the C64 in 1983, any machine with two joystick ports has been privy to one-on-one martial artistry. With the PlayStation launching the beat 'em up into 3D arenas, the competitive spirit is as strong as ever and with the PlayStation barely ten months old, it already boasts over twenty assorted beat 'em ups. Ordinarily, fighting games stick to the tried and trusted method of pitting two players against each other. Of those for the PlayStation, the most basic examples are the likes of the *Toshinden* pair, *Tekken*, and any *Mortal Kombat* or *Street Fighter* game you care to mention. Occasionally, however, a development team tries to break the restraints of the one-on-one idea, throwing variants into the mix. Acclaim's *WWF Wrestlemania* conversion is a perfect example of this and, in addition to its one-on-one mode, cashes in on its licence with a 'tag-



**OF ALL THE BEAT 'EM UPS ON THE PLAYSTATION, TEKKEN IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE FINEST. THAT IS UNTIL THE BRILLIANT SEQUEL COMES OUT LATER THIS YEAR.**

team' mode wherein two contestants battle it out in turns against the game's full complement of wrestlers.

Gradually, developers are realising that if the beat 'em up is to progress, the genre has to develop. After a backlash against the similarity of countless *Street Fighter* clones, Capcom hit back with *Street Fighter Alpha* which supplements its one-on-one basis with



**STREET FIGHTER ALPHA MAY NOT HAVE THE SMART 3D GRAPHICS OF TEKKEN BUT IT RANKS AS BEST FIGHTING GAMES AROUND. THE TWO-PLAYER VS BISON MODE IS NEAT ADDITION, TOO.**

a 'Team Up Mode' which pits two players against the might of M. Bison. Sadly, however, it seems that Capcom had little faith in this enjoyable mode, as it only appears if the game is beaten on Level 6 or above, and without the use of any continues. With even more beat 'em ups on the horizon, hopefully team play will form a larger part of the action: all against all *Tekken 2* anybody?



**MORTAL KOMBAT 3 FEATURES LOADS OF CORE.**



**WWF WRESTLEMANIA HAS A COOL TAG GAME.**



**2-PLAYER STREET FIGHTER: THE MOVIE? NAH.**





playing games against each other. The mocking and whining of winners and losers as simple goals are let in or a diving header roars into the top corner adds to the footy atmosphere perfectly, and a memory card provides a

useful back-up system for those longer leagues. The perfect game for getting a few mates around for after the pubs have closed. Smart.

★★★★★

## SERIAL KILLERS

At the moment the PlayStation can only support two players via a link cable, but if rumours are abound that is looking at ways of linking more machines together. The exact specifications of the a multi-link unit have yet to be con-

firmed, although it's believed to be a junction box or adaptor into which four, maybe even more PlayStations can be plugged. Imagine it now, eight people playing *Deathmatch Doom* simultaneously. Heaven here I come...

## CABLE SHOPPING

Although some games offer two-player excitement at no extra cost, you'll need to invest in either a link-up cable or multitap adaptor to play certain other titles. Sony produce both the Multitap and the Link cable, priced £32.99 and £19.99 respectively. Both are available from all good computer retailers.



## MULTIPLE CHOICE

The two-player experience isn't just limited to those with two PlayStations and a link cable, instead through the years developers have found ways to cram anything up to sixteen players around one machine. Including...

### SIMULTANEOUS PLAY

As shown in countless beat 'em ups (see *Fight!* panel), the majority of games prefer to allow players to compete against (or with) each other – *Loaded* being a perfect example. Sports games – and football games in particular – allow two users to grab a pad each and select the team of their choice to lead to victory. Basically, the game will then compensate for the actions of the two players by panning the screen in and out, so that both can be seen simultaneously. *FIFA '96*, *Actua Soccer*, and virtually every other footy game available use this system, although *Striker '96* tends to disadvantage the second player by giving them the more distant goal at the far end of the screen.

Games where players shoot 'into' the screen using a cursor are also very two-player-friendly, with both *Revolution X* and *Horned Owl* allowing two users to guide a cursor on to the bad guys who scabble on screen. Of all the games to allow simultaneous play, though, Team 17's conversion of *Worms* is probably the best. Up to four players are given four worms each and left to blow each other to kingdom come using a variety of given weapons. The randomly-generated levels span roughly three screen widths, and the maximum of sixteen worms are dropped into play, with each player taking it in turns to blow the others out of the game. *Worms*' four-player mode is what makes it one of the best multi-player



**TWISTED METAL IS A LAUGH, BUT NOT FOR LONG.**

games to date, making up for the less than clever CPU-controlled teams.

### SPLIT-SCREEN

If a game's two-player mode necessitates the players going head-to-head against each other, the screen is often split to allow the users a section each. The majority of PlayStation games using the split-screen method opt for a horizontal break, allowing the users to get a good overview of the action. *Twisted Metal*, for example, is split such a way to allow the users a better view of the surrounding arena – with *Hi-Octane* and



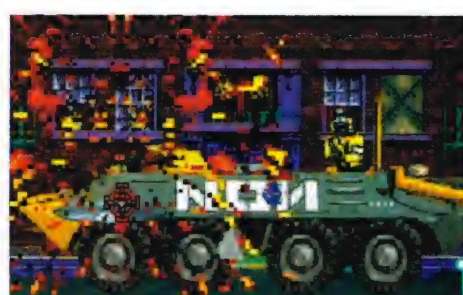
**SPLIT-SCREEN HI-OCTANE IS EXTREMELY SLOW.**

*Cyber Sled* following the same pattern. For the aerial japes of *Air Combat*, though, the developers opted for a vertical split to allow the users to see what was happening above and below their plane.

It's a far rarer sight for sports games to use a split-screen system, but both *V-Tennis* and Ocean's *Power Serve Tennis* offer a horizontally split-screen that allows both users a third-person view of their sprite; but puzzle games such as *Hebereke Popoitto* and *Crazy Chase* use the system very well indeed, and allow the players to keep an eye on what exactly their opponent is up to.



**WORMS REMAINS THE BEST FOUR-PLAYER GAME.**



**REVOLUTION X: NOT VERY GOOD, REALLY.**



# PLUS POINTS



**A** quick addendum to the Level 47 *Doom* problem from last month. The switch is in the enclosed area – chaingun the left-hand wall and that activates the platform. Use your map for guidance!

Send your views and comments to:  
**Plus Points,**  
**PlayStation Plus,**  
**Priory Court,**  
**30-32 Farringdon Lane,**  
**London,**  
**EC1R 3AU**

[playstation@cix.compulink.co.uk](mailto:playstation@cix.compulink.co.uk)

## PRODUCT PLACEMENT

I read the letters you have been publishing recently concerning the pricing of games. Frankly, no matter what excuses software companies use, games are obviously too expensive – but let's not dwell on that.

I don't know if this has been tried, or even thought of, before but how about firms sponsoring games. While playing *WipeOut*, I noticed billboards around the circuits. These had adverts on for Psygnosis. But what if these billboards were sold off to advertisers. You could turn a corner and be confronted with a Coke advert, or ads for Nike, SEGA Saturn, Adidas etc.

The extra income from advertisers could not only be used to reduce the price of games for customers but also force games to improve. After all, no one is going to pay to advertise in a crap game, are they?

I look forward to reading other people's responses to this idea, or even a comment or two for or against from the software houses.  
 Peter Stanley, Wirral

## HIT OR MISS

*Defcon 5* – it's a con all right. This load of tosh is only rivalled by *Rise of the Robots* when it comes to post-hype reality. Every review printed put *Defcon 5* at 80% or above – so why do I put *Defcon 5* at first place in the next generation library of disasters?

Quite simply, this game should never have reached the shelves in its present form for two reasons. Firstly, a majority of the content is superfluous to completing to game: forget the Power Levels, forget the Service Levels, hell, forget *all* the Domestic Levels. In fact only *three* levels need to be *briefly* visited to actually complete the game.

Secondly, and the reason *Defcon 5* is a first, what other title can be played from start to finish in *less than 15 minutes*? I fully expected to be presented with four or five subsequent missions – instead the credits roll. This is nothing less than a £40 rip-off.

I have been left feeling cheated after playing what is normally 'my type of game'. What really gets me is that I did everything right prior to shelling out my cash. I read the reviews, drooled over the ads – but there was no warning.

I see *Defcon 5* has already entered the Top Tens, so thousands of other punters have been truly duped.

Alistair G Donald, Fife

Firstly, *PlayStation Plus* did not rate *Defcon 5* "at 80% or above". We gave it a mere 72% and both Alex and Matt's comments were cautionary. Also, yes if you activate the self-destruct mechanism, the game is ridiculously short. An alternative method of play is to defeat the invaders *Doom*-style.

I would like to add my voice to the on-going debate about the validity of magazine game reviews. I think any review should be treated simply as an informed opinion, but nothing more. All too often, I have seen reviewers rate games I loathed. Take *Worms* for example – on the strength of the rave reviews in the gaming press, I hired it from Blockbuster Video to play before buying, and was horrified at how awful it is. Third rate Master system quality and graphics and mind-numbingly boring gameplay made it the greatest PlayStation disappointment to date. It all goes to show how subjective opinion really can be.

Simon Trenerry, Surbiton

Have Gremlin bribed the game press to give *Actua Soccer* good reviews?

There are a few major gameplay flaws in the program, like the fact that the game picks your players to control, not you. Okay, so the manual says you can override it, but two seconds later,

the machine switches back to the player it thinks is best. Shame really, as the game has as much intelligence as a *Big Break* contestant.

Fine, so the presentation and graphics are excellent, but if I tackle someone, I don't want two seconds of motion-captured sprite sliding on the floor so my opponent can whip the ball off my feet while I'm grounded – I want him to get up and run up the pitch.

There are too many other faults to mention but I urge anyone contemplating buying this game to try it first. I intend to take my copy back and hope the shop owner is nice/gullible enough to swap it for me.

P A Abbott, Leicester

*Actua Soccer* was released on Friday 8th March. I bought a copy on that day. The following day I returned it and got my money back. The reason for this? *Actua Soccer* has a fairly serious bug in it – if a substitution is made from a dead ball situation, the camera view goes haywire and you cannot see what's going on. The only option is to quit the game.

*Actua Soccer* is a very good, very complex game which has taken months, if not years, to develop. Yet I discovered this bug within one hour and do not understand how it was overlooked. I appreciate software companies are under pressure to release games to obtain a return on their investment but we are paying a substantial sum for these games and have every right to expect them to be bug free.

The retailer returned my money without any fuss. However, while I was there it became clear that some of the assistants knew about the bug but there had been no attempt to remove the game from sale. If people are going to continue selling the game, buyers should be made aware that this bug exists.

Interestingly, as I was playing the game in the shop to demonstrate the problem, a crowd gathered to watch. As soon as the bug appeared, the crowd disappeared.

I have heard rumours of other games being released with bugs in them – the PlayStation will stand or fall on the quality of its software. In these early days I would not expect games to be stretching the capabilities of the console or be particularly original, but error-ridden software is clearly bad news. I hope the PlayStation's long-term future is not going to be sacrificed for





## FAQ

The most frequently asked questions of this month are once again met with straight answers.

**When is Actua Golf coming out? It first appeared in Issue 1 of PlayStation Plus with a October release date, but there's still no sign of it.**

Gremlin have had problems galore with *Actua Golf*, which has seen its release date put back from the October date we first mentioned, then to December, back to January, and now right back to July. Apparently, the game is progressing well, but the addition of a few extra features (no doubt inspired by the release of US Gold's *World Cup Golf*) has extended its development time. 'We're a little embarrassed by it,' said a Gremlin spokesperson. Quite right.

**Motion-capture seems to be all the rage these days, what forthcoming games are ready for release that are set to feature the system?**

The number of motion-capture games is growing at a huge rate, but a condensed list of those ready for imminent (allowing for slipping release dates, that is) arrival in the shops include: *Sampras Extreme*, *Adidas Power Soccer*, *Die Hard Trilogy*, *Total NBA '96*, *Actua Golf*, and *Track and Field*.

**I've bought Alien Trilogy, but just cannot get past the Queen in her lair. Is there an easy way of killing her off?**

The best way to finish the Queen is to pick your way around her lair in a circular route, blasting all the eggs in the room, but ensuring no stray bullets hit the Queen — or she'll break away from her egg sac, meaning you'll have to take her and dozens of Facehuggers on at the same time. When all the eggs have been blown up, get the Queen in sight, and lob a grenade at her. She'll now break free from the sac and give chase. Lining the edge of the lair is a raised ledge which usually contains loads of useful power-ups. Move on to this and await the Queen. If you stand flush to the wall, the enraged royal cannot reach you, but tenaciously stands there lashing out with her claws. From this advantageous point, just blow her away with repeated shots and grenades and, eventually, she'll be reduced to a pile of green mush.

**What is happening to the PlayStation version of Hexen?**

Probe are converting the game for GT. The code is currently 40% complete, but very little is on show as Probe are perfecting the 3D routines needed to ensure the backdrops scroll smoothly. It is scheduled for a late summer release.



down the violence for the European Market completely ridiculous. Why the Powers-That-Be feel the need to take such drastic action is a mystery to me. Surely they must realise that the people who actually play the games want them in their original, unedited form. And what is more, it's really no trouble to get hold of an imported copy or, worse still, a pirate one. That results in a loss of sales for the distributors and possibly has a detrimental effect on the industry as a whole.

The whole issue regarding game violence has been totally blown out of all proportion by the media and politicians. The argument that game violence leads to violent tendencies in kids is utter nonsense. Anyone with enough intelligence to play a game ultimately knows the difference between fantasy and reality as well as right and wrong. A child playing *Mortal Kombat III* is not going to step outside his home and try to rip the skin off his mates. Why can't the media realise that this type of 'cartoon' violence is amusing and could have no more of an adverse effect than watching an episode of *The A Team*.

I see we now have *Mortal Kombat III* carrying a 15 Certificate. Since when did the BBFC have anything to do with videogames? And just how do they think this prevents anyone below fifteen getting hold of the game? Anyway, they can wander into any arcade and play it.

Censorship in games only detracts from the overall appeal of the game. Violence will always exist in all forms of media, and the tame violence found in games should be the least of politicians' worries. Obviously some standards need to be maintained and I'm not at liberty to say how far those standards reach, only that, at present, videogames are no where even near the limits of good taste.

To some extent I feel condescended upon by those who 'edit' games. After all, I'm over eighteen, so isn't it my basic right as a consumer to decide whether I want to see violence in games or not? This whole issue is ridiculous — why is it an issue at all? I'm sure many people share my view on the subject and I have just one thing to say to those in charge: "Leave the games alone and let me play them as they were intended to be played."

Stephen Woodward, Bournemouth



short-term profits.

This also raises the question of the role of magazine reviews. All game magazines have carried reviews of *Actua Soccer*, but no one has made mention of the bug. I'm not suggesting that you should actively test the games for such things, but if you find them, you ought to tell us. It is as much a factor in deciding whether to buy a game as the graphics or playability. I appreciate you will often be reviewing a pre-production copy so that the review is in print by the time the game is released, but there must be some way of addressing this issue. Maybe a Bugs Corner column where both reviewers and readers can highlight any problems they have found with a game. Maybe we could shame the software companies into getting it right.

John Cleaveley, Leeds

The reason we never spotted the said bug in *Actua Soccer* was that it didn't exist in the version we received. We were told our pre-release CD of the game was the version scheduled for release, and despite the criticisms we made of the viewpoint changing when you were about to shoot, overall we really liked the game. Having spoken to Gremlin, the bug is now widely known, and discussions are afoot for a solution to the problem both Sony and Gremlin's bug-spotters missed.

## THE EXORCISTS

I'm writing about video game certification. I think it's stupid to put certificates on games without FMV. Polygon characters aren't realistic enough to warrant 18 Certificates yet. Yes, they may bleed red blood but if you don't like gory games, no one's forcing you to buy them. Games with FMV bits, with real actors, should get the same certificates as films and videos.

Owen Parry, Gloucester



If *Resident Evil* is banned, or gets an 18 Certificate, I will be very disappointed. If people are stupidly worried about gore, why wasn't *Mortal Kombat III* banned? That contains loads of sick fatalities — Kano taking your skeleton out of your body, Shang Tsung throwing you onto a bed of spikes etc.

Sinan Kuzu, London

I find it slightly amusing that our Government believe violence in video games has an effect on our younger population. Censorship of games is an insult — the majority of kids can tell the difference between fantasy and reality.

The time has come for Parliament to address the real problems of unemployment, low wages and a lack of social amenities and not push the blame onto video games which, let's face it, most of us take with a pinch of salt.

Simon Brown, Leicester

I'm looking forward to the release of *Resident Evil* and, quite frankly, find the idea of toning



# NEXT MONTH

## PROJECT OVERKILL...

Yeah, yeah, yeah, we know we said we'd have Konami's *Project Overkill* in this issue but sadly things beyond our control went awry. We now have the preview code, however, and you can read all about this stunning twist on the *Syndicate* and *Doom* themes in the next issue. It's well worth the wait...

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### REVIEWED: DIE HARD TRILOGY



### REVIEWED: RESIDENT EVIL



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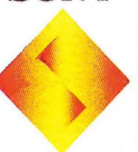
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